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THE
TRUE MODE OF BAPTISM

INVESTIGATED;

BEING A PLAIN AND COMPENDIOUS SUMMARY OF
EVIDENCES

IN FAVOUR OF SPRINKLING,

AND

AGAINST IMMERSION.

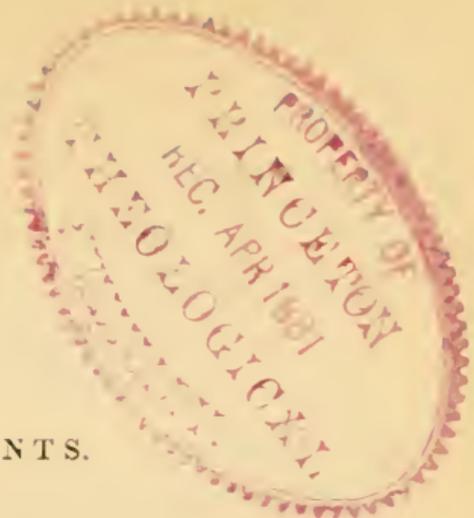
BY THOMAS MILLS.

AUTHOR OF 'CHRISTIANITY, ITS PROGRESS AND PRESENT IMPEDI-
MENTS,' AND OF 'SANCTIFICATION EXPLAINED AND ENFORCED.'

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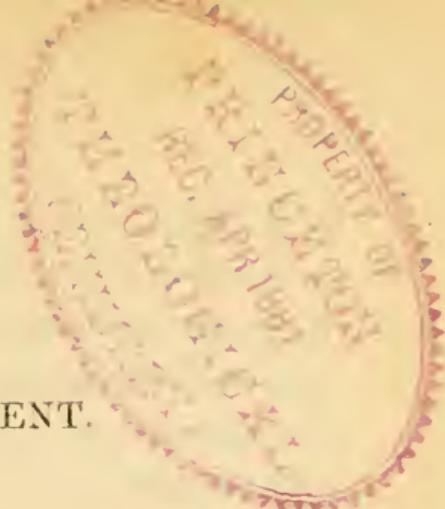


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It is with unfeigned reluctance that I have entered into the controversy on the mode of baptism. Many persons under my pastoral oversight, however, have often stated that they never heard the rite of baptism by sprinkling defended from the pulpit; that they were consequently but little acquainted with the arguments in its favour,—while immersionists, from the frequency with which their Ministers attempt to vindicate dipping, are familiar with the plausible sophistries with which that practise is defended; and that popular arguments in its favour were frequently obtruded upon them by zealous advocates, some of whom in no humble manner have attempted to show that it is the duty of Christians to be plunged in water. They have also so frequently requested me to give a public lecture on the mode of baptism, that I finally consented to do so. I, therefore, delivered a lecture in Parliament Street Chapel, Nottingham, and subsequently in other places; in which I endeavoured by an exposition of the true sense of the word of God, and a careful induction of its facts, to explain and vindicate the divinely appointed rite of sprinkling; and thus, at the same time, to oppose the groundless assumptions

of mistaken brethren, who represent a human ceremony as of divine and imperative ordination; and to check the unholy encroachments of a proselyting spirit, in so far as it may exist. I have been so often and so strongly urged, by members of various Christian churches, to publish the views and reasonings which that lecture contained, that they are now presented to the public in a more extended form.

My object in writing this treatise has been to supply a desideratum which is frequently expressed, viz. a work sufficiently large to contain a clear and compendious view of the argument which proves sprinkling to be right and immersion wrong; and yet small enough to render it suitable for general circulation among those persons,—and they form the largest class of society,—who have but little time for reading books, and little money to purchase them.

Absolute originality on the subject of baptism is almost impossible. We cannot make new facts; nor can we give correct expositions of the Holy Scriptures, without stating views which are held by other expositors. Writers who reason from the same premises, must necessarily be often led to the same conclusions, and much in the same manner. I have, therefore, not been surprised in having, since this treatise was written, met with forms of thought and language in other works, which are very coincident with my own. I have culled, however, where I thought I could do so to advantage. Condensation and clear-

ness are the objects at which I have aimed, in the vindication of what I believe to be truth.

It may be that some immersionists will think that I have spoken lightly of a practice which they venerate as a divine rite; but let them remember that it is not as an ordinance of Christ that I have done so, but as a human rite. I know of no controversial works in which I have met with more asperity and bitterness, than in works on baptism. I have scrupulously guarded against such an unhappy spirit. Though there may be persons, who are so sensitive on the subject of baptism, that to oppose the practise of dipping, is to offer them a personal affront; yet the "Baptists" within the circle of my acquaintance, both of the General and Particular denominations, are very estimable Christians. The piety and intelligence of many of them, and the signal services which, as churches, they have rendered to Christ, by their missions, require no eulogium from me. I rejoice to hold frequent and affectionate intercourse with them as brethren in the Lord; and I have served them in the pulpit, both in and out of England with pleasure. I should deeply regret if they should be so far mistaken, as to regard an attempt to refute their opinion, as an act of hostility or unkindness to themselves. Indeed, the more freely I endeavour to vindicate our views of Christ's ordinance, the more anxious do I feel to testify sincere and fervent Christian love to brethren whose

opinions those views constrain us to oppose. I would fain be a helper of their joy, when they are the means of turning sinners to God.

I hope there is not a word to be found in the following pages which Christian charity can condemn. But if I may judge how this treatise will be received by some, who are of various immersionist bodies, from the anger which my lectures have causelessly excited, I may expect to be assailed with acrimonious language, rather than be met with sound arguments in a kind and Christian spirit. If immersionists are right, what have they to fear from discussion; and if they are wrong, can they find it out too soon? That cause which is strong in its truth, neither requires nor obtains the slightest aid from human passion. When men lose their temper it betrays a misgiving that they are losing their cause. Angry men should remember, that the way to demolish a structure that offends them, is not to attack the builder; for it will stand though he may fall. Such men always inflict the greatest injury upon themselves and their denomination. If immersionists think that because we do not believe their practice of dipping to be the true mode of Christian baptism, we do not love the truth, we can only say that we will adopt it as the ordinance of the Lord, when they have convinced us that he instituted it. If they think that we are mistaken as to what is truth, let them instruct us; but let them

not be impatient, nor scold us; nor charge us with insincerity, impiety, or a want of common sense, because they deem us slow of heart to believe that their opinion is God's truth. To convince us they must clearly refute our reasonings, and employ arguments which they have not yet pressed into their service, if any such can be found; for the old ones have all failed. So long as we believe God's word to be true, we think we must believe their opinion to be false. We certainly have an equal right with them to be angry, on the ground of a difference of opinion; but we should be sorry to exercise the liberty to sin, for "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

Controversy is a less evil than error; especially when controversy is conducted with Christian temper, and error is associated with dogmatism and uncharitableness. The spirit of formalism and censorious exclusiveness in which immersion is commonly advocated, and sometimes practised, is a much more serious evil than immersion itself, considered as a mere mode.

Many advocates of immersion profess to welcome all attempts to prove it to be a false doctrine, as being sure to multiply the number of those who believe it to be true. I hope, therefore, that all such persons will zealously aid me in the circulation of this work, and I shall be satisfied with the result. Unfortunately immersionists in general do not read

works which are opposed to their own opinion. They represent us as opposing baptism when we oppose dipping; and as denying the Holy Scriptures, when we affirm that their interpretation of Scripture is incorrect.

Possibly some points in this argument may be singled out as assailable, though I know not which of them can be; but if any person believes that he can successfully grapple with, and overturn, the entire argument, in all its principles and parts, I can only say that, though I have not written for mere controversy, he may, of course, make the attempt. But let him not be anonymous; nor meet argument with declamation and mere epithets; nor indulge in a sinful temper; nor employ any language, but such as the Christian vocabulary will supply.

T. M.

Nottingham, October 1848.



TRUE MODE OF BAPTISM.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

SEVERAL denominations of Christians, who practise immersion as a religious ordinance, have thought proper to entitle themselves "Baptists," as though all undipped Christians were unbaptized. Indeed they affirm that sprinkling water on a person, in the name of the Holy Trinity, is not baptism; and sometimes they deride and reprehend that rite in strong and scornful language. Some churches deem it right to attach such importance to immersion, as to make it a condition of membership, and to treat us, who have not been religiously plunged, as unfit for Christian communion with them at the Lord's table; and though they do not withhold other and minor tokens of Christian recognition, they refuse thus to acknowledge us as Christians. This peculiar rite is their distinctive bond of Christian fellowship, and the cause of their separation from those branches of the Saviour's church with which they otherwise agree.

Attempts are unceasingly made by some immersionists, in various localities, not so much to save the unregenerate, as to proselyte to their own party those who are converted to God, and thus to alienate them from the churches which were the means of their conversion, and in the bosoms of which, they find sanctuaries of peace. Great numbers have been

thus proselyted; but if they could succeed in turning all Christians to the "baptistry," the world would not contain one Christian more than it does now, and not a soul would in consequence be saved from death. Their's is a useless expenditure of zeal, which might be beneficially directed to really useful objects. In some places there are zealots, whose indiscreet and impetuous zeal is nearly in an inverse ratio to their knowledge; who attach exaggerated importance to their favourite rite; and who seem as though they would move heaven and earth to immerse the members of other churches. They so confidently represent a merely human and unscriptural opinion as an absolute truth, and so constantly enforce it by bold and positive assertions, as to lead timid and uninformed people to imagine, that a doctrine which is so earnestly defended in public and in private must surely be true; and especially as we, who in general have to attend to more important subjects, so seldom refute their sentiments, and administer to them any merited rebuke.

When the defenders of true Christian baptism have maintained their views of Christ's ordinance, some immersionists, instead of attempting fairly and fully to refute their arguments in a mild and gentle spirit; have designated them by mere epithets, as though they spoke from the throne of judgment. Mr. A. Campbell, of America, attributes our views to "prejudice, bigotry, and interest;"* and he calls them crudities, boyisms, puerilities, mere trifling, and things beneath notice. Dr. Carson thunders like an offended little infallible. He seems, in his book, to tremble with "horror" at the temerity and impiety of his theological opponents, as an archangel would tremble at sin; and he scolds and even scalps them most unmercifully; but evidently all from so high a

* See his debate with Mr. Maccalla, page 241.

sense of duty, that that we cannot but believe him to have been as thoroughly sincere as he was uncharitable.* Indeed, various advocates of immersion treat their opponents in a summary and supercilious manner. They put on airs befitting only infallible beings; are impatient of contradiction; and denounce sprinkling as though it were foolish or sinful. Why should there be so many mimic terrors? They are all powerless, and excite no alarm. No one can frighten us out of our honest convictions of truth. If any man will pour forth vitriol or gall, let him be assured that they run off a good conscience as they would run off a globe of glass. Unholy and unloving words can injure those only who utter them. If a man is able to prove his doctrines to be true, he may as well vindicate them calmly, and in love to those who think differently. Severe and hard speeches may convince us that those who use them are angry, but they will not convince us that our views are erroneous. Such polemics constrain us to think that their temper and prejudices are much stronger than their arguments. If severe and unmeasured language could have determined this controversy, it would have been settled in favour of dipping long since. But we can none of us determine what is true by authority; for the wisest man is but a learner in

* The following are a few samples of Dr. Carson's language, selected from a small pamphlet of 74 pages, in reply to Mr. President Beecher of Illinois College, America. "Extravagantly idle;—childish fallacy;—mere trifling;—nonsense;—perverse cavilling;—monstrous idea;—blasphemy;—gothic rhetoric;—give the lie to the inspired narrator;—give the lie to the Holy Spirit;—neological canon;—grounded on infidelity; this is a respectful way of calling him (the Holy Ghost) a liar;—heresy;—childish trifling;—sickening;—false, fanatical, and subversive of all revealed truth; absurdly and extravagantly idle, &c., &c." His large treatise abounds in language of a similar kind. He speaks of his learned opponents as though they were men of weak understandings, and very frequently attempts to terrify them

the school of Christ. We cannot make truth different nor better than it is; but we may easily injure ourselves by vain attempts to do so. If we are angry with one another, we shall never do each other any good; but we shall do ourselves much harm. It is painful to see brethren lose the spirit of Christ, while they think they are contending for his cause. If we try to merely vanquish each other, the enemy will conquer us all. Mere declamation, and plausible sophisms, and vaunting words, may influence those people who are led by sound more than by sense; but they never can overturn the truth. It becomes all Christians to put on the gentleness and meekness of Christ. If our brethren will only use kind and gentle words,—there are plenty of them,—and thus express a catholic and loving spirit, they are welcome to use the strongest arguments they can find; and we will give to them all the consideration to which they are entitled.

There are persons who hold immersion to be as true as the gospel, and who consequently regard opposition to the dipping ceremony as a manifestation of temerity, equal to that displayed by an attack on Christianity itself. Many immersionists appear to imagine that they alone have a right to speak on this subject. They can never hear too much in favour of immersion, but they are offended when it is opposed. The monopoly they assume might have been patented to them from heaven. If we vindicate sprinkling, we are regarded as invaders, and disturbers of the peace; and they marvel that we cannot let them declaim for ever, and be silent.

with the awful word, blasphemy; and at the same time he protests how very proper his feelings are.

It is to be deeply lamented that this Minister, who was a distinguished scholar, and, with this sad exception, a good man, should have been led to disfigure his writings with such language.

So much irritable impatience betrays a degree of fear. Surely truth, whatever it may be, is public property; and the liberty to ascertain and defend it belongs equally to both sides. We have at least as much right to defend our views of Christ's ordinances as others have to oppose them; without weakening the bonds of Christian friendship, or calling forth uncharitable remarks. Why should they love us less because, from a sense of imperative duty to God, and in the spirit of faithfulness and love to them, we speak what we sincerely believe to be true? Will they deny us the right which they themselves so frequently exercise? We are wishful to contend earnestly for what we believe to be the faith and commandments once delivered to the saints, but we certainly do not wish to be guilty of enticing the members of the evangelical "Baptist" churches to our own. Many Pedobaptist churches have suffered much from the proselyting spirit, and such a spirit is deserving of of very severe reprehension. Immersionists have said and are constantly saying so much in defence of their views of baptism, and we have said so little, that our views have been represented to be indefensible. We do not glory in water. It is not our denominational symbol, nor our bond of union. We all, indeed, are in danger of devoting more attention and affection to the distinctive peculiarities of our own denominations, than to the great fundamental truths in which all evangelical Protestants agree; and of being too tenacious in respect to church ordinances and church order, on which revelation is less explicit, and in which it has pleased God to leave much to our own sense of what is most convenient and proper. It cannot be proper to single out this one rite from all that the New Testament teaches, so as to magnify its importance, and to devote an undue attention to it, to the practical disparagement of more important things. We do not ever and anon, obtrusively thrust

our views on the attention of our esteemed brethren who deem it right to be immersed. We desire to live with them in peace and love. But our quietness is often attributed to cowardice and fear. Indeed, there are men who have temerity and indiscretion enough to affirm, that we have not sufficient discernment to see the truth, or that we have not honesty enough to avow it. Water baptism could scarcely be deemed more important by some brethren, even if like faith and holiness it were indispensable to salvation. We certainly maintain and enforce the obligation to be baptized with water, and we therefore constantly observe the ordinance; but we deem the baptism of the soul by the Holy Spirit, to be of much greater importance. Christianity looks much more to the spirit of obedience, than to our formal compliance with certain rites, which men define more precisely and authoritatively than the Holy Scriptures. It is proper, however, that we should observe its ordinances according as its rubric has prescribed the mode; whether that prescription be given by the express directions, or by the personal example, of holy and inspired men of God.

It is impossible to vindicate the right mode of baptism without opposing the wrong, and unfortunately without seeming to oppose Christian brethren who observe it. We agree with the great body of immersionists in the use of water, and of the sacred formulary of words; that the rite is a symbol of renewing grace, and subordinately a sign of the Christian covenant, and a token of the Christian profession: and with them we reject baptismal regeneration, the use of sponsors, and the sign of the cross; as mockeries and delusions. One principal question in dispute between us and them is in respect to the true and proper mode of baptism. Now we believe that sprinkling or shedding forth water is the true mode of baptism, and that immersion is not. Here

then we join issue with them, in a friendly and Christian spirit. We doubt not that many of those who have heard only their present practice advocated, if they attentively study our arguments, and try them not by their own opinions, but by the word of God, will be convinced that immersion is not the baptism which Christ commanded, and which his apostles observed. Indeed to us it is so clear that dipping is wrong as a Christian ordinance, that we do not despair of its being totally abandoned. Our beloved brethren who immerse may fill up their "baptistries" without ceasing to be holy, useful, and prosperous churches.

IF IT COULD BE PROVED THAT WE ARE WRONG IN THE FORM, WE ARE RIGHT IN THE SPIRIT OF OBEDIENCE.

Even if sprinkling were not the true mode of baptism, we observe it as an act of obedience to the Lord Christ, and from a sincere and honest conviction that it is his appointment. We also hold the great truth of which baptism is a sign, as much as any immersionists can. The sign is surely made for the thing signified, and not the thing signified for the sign; as a likeness is made for the man, and not the man for the likeness. We therefore keep the law according to our interpretation of its true meaning; and we seek the great spiritual blessing which water baptism sets forth. Since therefore God will not condemn us, why should our brethren?

There are several positive laws of God which both they and we observe, not in the letter, but in the spirit. To mention one such law, "Greet one another with a holy kiss"; II. COR. XIII. 12. &c. meaning that men should kiss men, and women women; This is as sacred a sign of Christian brotherhood, as baptism is of renewing grace; and it is enjoined in five places, and by two apostles. If dipping were enjoined as

plainly and expressly as the kiss of charity,—though we know that it is not,—it would surely be as proper to obey the spirit of one command as of the other; when the form is impracticable, or liable to abuse, or dangerous, or otherwise inconvenient and incongruous. Christian love, and the right hand of Christian fellowship, as being more accordant with our national customs and feelings, are undoubtedly accepted by the Lord as acts of obedience, in the absence of the precise form prescribed to the Greeks. And why should not our sincere belief and obedience to the law of baptism be also accepted; and especially as we believe that we observe the actual form that was intended by the Lord Jesus, and observed by his primitive disciples, and that immersionists do not? Our obedience is of faith, how then can it be sin? Immersionists deem their fashion to be right; let them therefore observe it as such, in a right spirit; and if they have no opportunity of learning better, God will be pleased with their well meant obedience: but let them not blame us because we cannot bow to their interpretation of Christ's law. We do not doubt but that our gracious God accepts sincere and well meant obedience to the spirit of his laws, in respect to phylacteries,—which the Pharisees observed in the letter and not in the spirit;—to washing one another's feet; to the law of the shew bread; and of the Jewish sabbath; to saying the "Lord's prayer," and to baptisms. The spirit of obedience always leads men to observe the proper outward acts, in so far as they are understood, and are practicable. If a man loves God with all his heart, he will do all he can to please him. Some men allow this doctrine and act upon it relation to other things, but deny it in respect to this one rite of baptism. They speak as though, after we have done our best to understand the law of Christ, he condemns us for what at most amounts to no more than a verbal mistake about

a Greek word; in consequence of which supposed mistake, we do not use water enough, nor use it after a certain manner. You may serve God and keep the commandments in their letter and outward forms, and attach as much importance to every ritual punctilio as the Pharisees did, and yet be fatally defective in the true spirit of obedience to God. The advocates of formality tithe anise, mint, and cummin, though at the same time they neglect the weightier matters of the law. "The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life." If you possess and practically exemplify the right spirit, you cannot be very seriously wrong in the ritual modes, especially where they are not very expressly and explicitly defined.

IMMERSION NOT EXPRESSLY ENJOINED.

If it were possible to prove that any one instance of baptism is spoken of in the New Testament as an act of immersion, that instance would not prove immersion to be the only mode of baptism that was observed; and still less would it prove that that mode is enjoined upon us. Our Lord said of prayer, "When ye *stand* praying forgive." MARK XI. 25. He thus speaks of standing as a mode in prayer; but that does not forbid kneeling; nor can it be supposed to give a preference to standing, as the most proper posture in prayer. In like manner, if we had an instance of baptism being observed by a person being dipped in water, that would not prove dipping to be the only proper mode; but only that it is one mode of baptism. But where is such an instance to be found in the New Testament? Nowhere.

If the complete immersion of the body of every Christian, be the only proper mode of baptism allowable, is it not remarkable that that one only mode should never once be expressly commanded or explicitly defined? Is it not also surprising that

among so many narratives of the administration of this sacred ordinance, not one of the incidents of a single dipping should ever be mentioned; though many must have occurred, if all the people were plunged over head in water? and that there is not one single certain allusion to such a ceremony in all the New Testament; but that on the contrary many circumstances and allusions are entirely opposed to the immersion theory? If there be such commands and allusions, so plain that he who runs may read; must it not be regarded as strange that, in these days, when every christian has a copy of the holy book, and when knowledge is cheaper than bread, the great majority of plain and learned readers, who regard that book with supreme veneration, and whose constant study is to ascertain its meaning and to keep its laws, should fail to discover them?

We are often told indeed that the command to be baptized is a command to be dipped; for immersionists affirm that to baptize is to dip and only to dip; and that it designates the mode of baptism specifically. The main argument by which they try to prove the Christian duty to be immersed is founded on the alleged meaning of the Greek verb baptizo. (βαπτίζω) This argument must be somewhat unintelligible to those who are ignorant of Greek; and amongst those who are well acquainted with Greek, it is a subject of much controversy. But can it be deemed credible that God has enjoined an imperative duty in so obscure and dubious a form as by the meaning of a single word, and notwithstanding that multitudes of learned and good men see many valid reasons to believe that that said word, as used in the book of God, has no such meaning? Other duties are described circumstantially, and are enjoined so plainly that plain people can understand them. Since immersion is not enjoined with equal plainness, it cannot, to say the least, be equally

certain that God has commanded it; as all specific duties are enjoined in terms which are not of doubtful import.

If the Lord Jesus directed his disciples to plunge each other in water, it must be the action only that is important, and not any mere name of the action. In that case, we should have had such Greek words, as describe the act of being put under water, used indiscriminately in the sacred narratives; as we use immerse, dip, submerge, plunge, &c., indiscriminately to describe the same thing. We might sometimes have had *buthizo*; ($\beta\upsilon\theta\iota\zeta\omega$) the New Testament meaning of which Greenfield gives, in his Greek Lexicon, as being to immerse; to submerge; to cause to sink; &c. We might also have expected to have met with the word *pontizo*; ($\pi\omicron\nu\nu\tau\iota\zeta\omega$) to plunge in deep water: and *epikluzo*; ($\epsilon\pi\iota\kappa\lambda\upsilon\zeta\omega$) to overflow with deep water. And there is *duno*; ($\delta\upsilon\nu\omega$) and its derivatives, one of which may be mentioned, viz. *dupto*, ($\delta\upsilon\pi\tau\omega$) which has both the sound and the sense of our word dip. Indeed Schrevelius, though his definitions are in Latin, in this instance gives the English to dip and to dive, as the sense of *dupto*. *Kataduno* ($\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\delta\upsilon\nu\omega$) means to immerse expressly. Schrevelius gives its meaning as being demergo; which is to plunge over head and ears; to submerge, &c.; and Jones in his compendium of the Lexicons by Damm, Sturze, Schleusner, and Schweighæuser, gives its meaning as being, to plunge down or into; to sink under, &c. When immersion came to be practised by the Greeks, they used this word to describe the mode of the ordinance; but the ordinance itself, they, of course, still denominated *baptisma*. The Latins also, when immersion became common, used their proper Latin words to describe it, as *immergo*, &c. But instead of having words used indiscriminately to describe and enforce a specific rite, as though the

act of being plunged were the thing enjoined, we have always the one word baptizo used, in such a way, and in connection with such circumstances and truths, as prove it to be a generic term, in its New Testament sense. And when baptizo is paraphrased and explained by other words, those words are, pour, shed forth, &c.; which is clearly opposed to the opinion, that to baptize is absolutely to dip.

But though baptizo is the word uniformly employed in the inspired original of the New Testament, it probably would not be the word commonly spoken by the Lord Jesus, or by John, or the Apostles. They did not commonly speak the Greek tongue; but as they mingled with the common people of Judea, they spoke in their vernacular language; which was the Syriac, or Syro-chaldaic, a formation of the Hebrew; so that the common people heard him gladly in their native tongue. Those words of our Lord which are untranslated, even in the Greek, as, "Talitha cumi," MARK, v. 41. "Ephphatha," MARK, vii. 34., and "Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani," MATTHEW xxvii. 46, are Syriac words. He spake from heaven to Saul in a similar language,—the Hebrew, ACTS, xxvi. 14. The word which he, and John, and the Apostles, and the people generally used, would, in all probability, be a Syriac word. It would assist us in our inquiry if we could ascertain what the word originally employed was. Happily, the means of learning it are at command, in the Syriac translation of the New Testament. This was the first translation ever made. It was made very early, some say in the first century, and all admit that it was made not later than early in the second; so that some of the contemporaries of the Apostle John would still be living at the time. It bears the name of the Peshito, that is, the literal or simple; because it contains the precise, sense of the original Greek

text, as it was understood in that early age. Accordingly this version is regarded as being of almost equal authority with the inspired original itself. As this translation was made so early, and for those who spoke the Syriac tongue, and consequently for the Jews; and as the word originally used to designate baptism must have continued in daily use, from the frequent observance of the ordinance; and have been in use at the time that this version was made; that same word would probably be used by the translator to designate this ordinance. Now those who know Syriac affirm that this word is not *tzeba*, which means to dip; nor is it a word that denotes any other specific mode of observing the ordinance; so that no precise form could have been imperatively and specifically prescribed, and much less immersion: the spiritual intents and objects of the ordinance only being of that importance which is now humanly attached to a ceremony. The Syriac word is *emad*. It is a generic term and means to stand; to confirm; to establish; as a pillar is established. And hence, the English word *made*, to be constituted. It is said to correspond with the same word in the Chaldee, and Arabic. The Hebrew word *emad* (עמד) certainly has precisely the same sense and sound. As the emblematical washings of the law were observed to sanctify and purify persons and things, so the emblematical washing appointed by our Lord, would thus be to formally confirm and establish Christians, as such. The primary name of the ordinance thus denoted the formal confirmation of new converts and their children, as belonging to Christ; and the mode in which it was done, viz., by an emblematical cleansing, denoted that they were not 'Stablished, strengthened, and settled,' by oaths or by habit, interest or prejudice, but by the gracious influence of the Spirit of God, the true Baptizer. May not this explain the meaning of the body of Christians being described as 'the pillar and ground of

the truth' ? 1. TIM. III. 15 ; and of the glorified being said to be ' Pillars in the temple of God, to go no more out' ? REV. III. 12 ; and may it not account for the origin of the papal rite of confirmation ? There are other passages which it seems to explain, such as Rom. XIV. 4, ' God is able to make him stand.' No such practice as dipping can be deduced from this name of the ordinance. The proper mode of observing it must be learned from the mode actually observed by the Apostles, as far as circumstantial evidence teaches it. It may be objected that the two names, *emad* and *baptizo*, denote two different things, but what if the ordinance denotes those two things, viz., a confirmation of Christian discipleship and the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit, may not both names be of divine authority ? Let the reader, however, give to this argument the consideration to which he deems it entitled. The New Testament in Greek is our only sure guide, and *baptizo* is the only word which God employs in the command which constitutes our duty. As both *emad* and *baptizo* are generic terms, our Lord, in using them, could not have attached so much importance to the precise method as immersionists do.

When the Apostles wrote in Greek, they invariably used some form of the verb *baptizo*. Dr. Carson and others affirm that it never expresses anything but mode ; but he admits that all the Lexicographers are against him. *Baptizo* is a derivative from *bapto*. It seems to have much the same meaning, in the classics, but with greater latitude, and rather to have superseded it than to denote a distinct idea ; as *bapto*, it is said, is commonly used in the early, and *baptizo* in the later writers ; but in a similar sense. Most writers regard them as being synonymous in the main. Dr. Halley says that *bapto* is more expressive of mode than *baptizo*, as to dip is than to immerse ; that with the exception of a compound in Pindar, where it stands as a relic in Greek

literature, it is first found in Plato and Aristotle, in the sense of to overwhelm; that it rather denotes covering with water than dipping in water; that it has greater breadth of meaning than *bapto*; and that in the New Testament it is used in a more unrestricted sense, and without reference to mode.

There is reason to believe that the most ancient use of *bapto* was in the sense of to dye, and that it acquired the meaning of to dip from the circumstance of dipping being the usual mode of dyeing. It is used by Homer, the most ancient Greek writer, to denote staining, or dyeing, and very frequently by other ancient writers also. This primary sense *bapto* never lost, though often used in the secondary sense of to dip.

Even if the primary meaning of these verbs had been to immerse, it does not follow that they should have retained that meaning in all countries where a Greek dialect was spoken, and in all ages of time. There are numbers of words in all languages which have various meanings, and words in a spoken language often change their meanings. Thus the verb to spring, primarily denotes the rising of water in a fountain; it also means many other things, either as a verb or a noun; as the spring of a watch; a leap; to fire a mine; the growth of a plant; the spring of the year, &c.; and yet we never mistake the sense. Villain anciently meant a villager, but now a wicked wretch. The meaning of words sometimes so enlarges and entirely alters, that the original idea is left out. Thus prevent, which anciently meant, and according to its derivation from *pre-venio*, properly means, to come before, or to anticipate, is now used in the sense of to hinder. Indifferent, formerly meant impartial; impertinent meant irrelevant; and tyrant, parasite, and sophist, were anciently the honourable denominations of kings, magistrates, and philosophers. Candlestick originally denoted a *stick* to

hold a candle; it may now denote a pillar of gold for the same purpose. Multitudes of words have been subject to similar mutations in their use. The radical meaning of a word is very often quite different to its specific sense in actual use, which must be determined by its context, and by circumstances. Immersionists assume that *bapto* and *baptizo* have retained their alleged one meaning in all ages, from Homer to the last Greek writer. Let such an assumption be proved, and we shall have an unexampled phenomenon in the tongues of Babel; an instance of identity in a changing world for twelve hundred years; a pair of corresponding verbs, like parallel wheels running on under water, in deep ruts, and in a straight line through many ages of time; and which are to run on in the same course for ever. By what unalterable law of destiny can these two words have become immutable, amidst all the tortuous fluctuations of human speech, and the countless evolutions and accidents of time? Immersionists attempt to give a limited meaning to the word *baptizo*, which it has been often shown does not belong to it; they tell us,—but they have not proved it, that it means always and only to dip, though it certainly has other meanings; and then they build a system of ceremonies on that transparently incorrect interpretation, to which they tell us it is our duty to submit, as an act of obedience to God.

To establish their system, they must prove that to baptize is for one person to put another under water, and to raise him up again, and that it never means anything else; for if it is ever used in another sense, it may be used in that other sense in the New Testament, unless they can prove to the contrary.

The Lexicons say that *bapto* and *baptizo* mean, not only to immerse and to overwhelm, but also to wash, to cleanse, &c. Mr. N. L. Rice, of America, has published the definitions given in various Lexicons in proof of this. They are as follow: Heder-

icus defines *bapto* to mean among other things, To dye; to wash. Coulon, To dye; to cleanse. Ursinus, To wash; to sprinkle. (*aspergo*.) Schrevelius, To dye; to wash; to draw water. Groves, To wash; to wet; to moisten; to sprinkle; to steep; to imbue; to dye. Scapula, To stain; to colour: to wash; to dye. Donnegan, To dye; to colour; to wash. In each of these instances, the verb to wash, denotes the cleansing process irrespective of the mode. How then can it be proclaimed to the world that *bapto* means to immerse only? and if *bapto* does not mean simply to dip, still less can *baptizo*; because, as a derivative, it must have a less strict meaning than its root. Many learned men affirm that it is a general rule in the Greek language, that the derivatives in *izo* are not limited to the original meaning of their primitives; but have uniformly an extended meaning. *Baptizo* is invariably used in the New Testament in reference to Christian baptism. Mr. Rice has collected the following definitions of this verb. Scapula and Schrevelius, give To wash; to cleanse; as two of its senses. Hedericus, To cleanse; to wash; to baptize in a sacred sense. Parkhurst, To immerse in, or wash with water, in token of purification. Robinson, in the New Testament, To wash; to cleanse; to purify. Bretschneider, Properly often to wash; simply to wash; to cleanse; I wash or cleanse myself. Suidas, To wet; to cleanse; Secondly to immerse, &c. Schleusner, To cleanse; to wash; to purify with water. Wahl, defines it, First, to wash; to perform ablution; to cleanse; Secondly, to immerse, &c. The Latin words, *lavo* and *abluo*, to cleanse; to wash; which are used in most of the above Lexicons, signify washing and cleansing in any mode. Things or persons may certainly be washed, wetted or cleansed without being dipped in water. In addition to the above definitions, various Lexicons have also given the following; To dive; to lead; to pierce; to fill;

to draw up; to pollute; to overwhelm; to perish; to purge; to redden; to affright; to put under; and to stain. Lexicographers do not determine the meaning of words by authority, but they ascertain and define the sense in which they are used by respectable writers. It is not difficult for men of ordinary information to learn the meaning of a word from its context, as well as the compilers of dictionaries. No Lexicon of the least authority can be found that affirms what many immersionists affirm, that baptizo means to dip and only to dip. When baptizo conveys the idea of immersion it refers to the condition rather than to the action. If an object be painted, besmeared, or covered over, it is baptized in the classical sense of the word.

So far from the two Greek verbs always signifying one action, and that action immersion, they have a variety of meanings; as the senses in which they are used amply prove. Several instances have often been quoted in this controversy, of the use of *bapto*, *baptizo*, and their derivatives, in the ancient classics and by the Greek fathers, as they are styled, which clearly prove that those words are used in other senses than that of to dip, or to overwhelm. For example: Hippocrates, one of the fathers of medical science, who lived in the fifth century before Christ, speaking of dyeing liquid, says; 'When it DROPS upon the garments they are baptized.' (*baptetai.*) So that a garment is baptized when drops fall upon it. Of what moment is it whether those drops be coloured, or colourless? The advocates of immersion are compelled by this use of the word, to admit that *bapto* signifies to *dye* by sprinkling; why then should it not signify to *wet* by sprinkling. Arrian and Plutarch speak of baptizing the beard. That was not to dip but to dye the beard, no matter how. Ælian speaks of a garland of flowers being baptized with ointment. The flowers could not have been dipped in ointment. Diodorus Siculus, quoted by

Stuart; Josephus in Ant. Book III. ch. 7, and Judges v. 30, speak of garments embroidered with flowers, as being baptized with them. Any person who saw such garments would naturally say, in a figure, that they were sprinkled with flowers. Sacred and profane history say they were baptized. Aristophanes speaks of Magnes, a comedian, baptizing (*baptomenos*) his face with tawny colours; and yet the man did not plunge his face in paint, but besmeared it. Aristotle speaks of a certain substance which, being rubbed or squeezed, stains (*baptei*) the hand. In this instance also, there is no reference whatever to immersion. Homer, one of the oldest Greek writers,—for he lived nine hundred years before Christ,—speaks of a lake being baptised (*ebapto*) with the blood of a wounded frog; meaning, of course, not that the lake was dipped into the frog's blood, but that it was stained by it.* In one of the Sybilline oracles, quoted by Plutarch, in his life of Theseus, there is a poetical prediction of the future fortunes of Athens. 'Thou mayest be baptized, O bladder, but thou canst not dip.' (*dunai*.) These words establish a distinction between being baptized, or floating on troubled waters, and going down into water. Baptized is used in contradistinction to dipped; so that the two conditions must, in this instance, be different. The bladder was buoyant among the curling and crested waves, as they rolled over and about it. It was baptized by superfusion, not by immersion. An object may, therefore, according to this high

* See the battle of the Frogs and Mice; a mock-heroic poem, and a satire on 'military glory.' Crambophagus, a frog, was mortally wounded by his furious antagonist, Lychenor, a mouse.

'Lychenor following with a downward blow,
Reached in the lake, his unrecovered foe,
Gasping he rolls, a purple stream of blood,
Distains (*ebapto*) the surface of the silvery flood.'

BOOK III.

Cowper renders it "Reddening with his blood, the wave, &c.

authority, be baptized and yet not be dipped. Origen, a Greek Christian writer, who was born in the second century, speaks of the wood on the altar as having been baptized with the water that was poured on it at the command of the prophet Elijah.† To pour, therefore, whether the object be wood, or an altar, or a person, must be to baptize; for Origen, though a visionary in theology, surely understood his native tongue. Irenæus, a celebrated Greek Christian writer, and a bishop of the second century, alluding to water falling upon the dry earth, compares the baptism of our bodies to the rain which is freely shed from heaven.* Justin Martyr, who also wrote early in the second century, said, ‘What is the use of that baptism which cleanses only the flesh and the body? Baptize the soul from anger and from covetousness, from envy and from hatred, and then the whole person will be clean.’§ Baptize is thus applied to the soul. It is construed with *apo*, (from) which is incorrectly rendered out of, in the narrative of our Lord’s baptism; and in this instance it is used by one of the earliest and purest Christian writers,—in whose time the word may be supposed to have retained the sense attached to it in the days of the Apostles, as synonymous with cleanse, and being clean. To dip the soul from anger, &c. is absurd. To baptize, therefore, in this place, is not to dip. In a narrative by Eusebius, (Book III. 123.) preserved by Clement of Alexandria, we are told of a youth—who left the church and

† He says “Elias did not baptize the wood upon the altar, but commanded the priests to do that. How then was he, who did not baptize himself, but left it to others, about to baptize when he came according to the prophecy of Malachi?” Origen. Com. in Joh.

* Irenæus adv. Hær. III. 17. quoted by Dr. Halley, in his work on the Sacraments, p. 432.

§ Justin adv. Trypho. p. 231. quoted in the Congregational Magazine, 1841, p. 343.

joined a band of robbers, and whom the Apostle John was the means of restoring, being baptized with his own tears. That certainly was not to be dipped in tears. Dr. Halley mentions Gregory Nazianzen, and Athanasius, as speaking of being baptized with tears; and of martyrs being baptized in their own blood; which could not possibly have been by dipping. Baptism, therefore, as used by these ancient writers, was not synonymous with immersion. Martyrs were not dipped in their own blood, nor penitents in their own tears. Why then should it be supposed, when the same writers speak of baptism with water, that they mean immersion in water? Though we reject antiquity as a theological tutor, we must pay deference to its authority as an interpreter of language.

In the life of Pythagoras by Jamblichus, an ancient writer, one of his directions is given as being; 'Baptize not in the perirranterion, or basin.' The allusion is undoubtedly to baptism by sprinkling. The perirranterion stood near the entrance of the temple, like the papal holy water. The priest sprinkled the people with a branch of laurel or olive, as the Jewish priests did with hyssop. Virgil, in his vi. Æneid, speaks of these lustrations thus:—

'A verdant branch of olives in his hand,
He moved around and purified the bands;
Slow as he passed the lustral waters shed,
Then closed the rites, and thrice invoked the dead.'

Justin, who was born about sixty years after the death of our Lord, states that idolators sprinkled themselves before presenting their offerings, in imitation of the true baptism, signified by the prophets; and he calls them pretended purifications, (Apol. i. p. 94.) The true baptism which they imitated, of course, was by sprinkling, for no man can regard sprinkling as an imitation of dipping. Other ancient writers, speak of the lustrations by sprinkling, among

the pagans, as heathen baptisms. It is quite clear, therefore, that sprinkling was baptism, whether it were the true baptism, or a pagan imitation of it.

A part of Psalm LI. 7. 'Purge—or, as in the Hebrew, sprinkle—me with hyssop.' is rendered in the Septuagint,—which is the Old Testament in Greek, translated by seventy persons, about three hundred years before the death of the Lord Jesus,—'Sprinkle me with hyssop;' and thus rendered, this verse is applied to baptism in the commentary of Theodoret,—whom Mosheim describes as an eloquent, copious, and learned writer, and a bishop of Cyprus; 'Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed, for the gift of baptism alone can produce this cleansing.' Other Greek and Latin authors are said to do the same thing; so that sprinkling must, in those early times, have been considered to be scriptural baptism; though, as the men of early times could never make enough of forms, they practised immersion, and that three times over, and with divers appendages.

The above examples show the sense in which the word baptize was sometimes understood by pagan and Christian writers, when the Greek tongue was spoken, both before and after Christ. Others might be quoted to show that it sometimes meant to wet; to colour; to inject; to perfume, as the head; to dye, as the hair; to cleanse; to besmear, as a glutton in eating; to purge; to tint, as the colours of a flower, &c. These and many other extracts, will for ever preserve the church of God from being imposed upon by such an error as that *bapto* and *baptizo* mean to dip and only to dip. Such an assertion can never be sustained. So incontestible is the fact that *bapto* is used in other senses than that of to dip, that Dr. Carson himself distinctly maintains, in page 46, that by any thing implied or referred to in some instances, it could not be known that *bapto* ever signifies to dip. Mr. Thorn has shown that these two words are used

in about fifty senses,* even in passages cited by immersionists themselves. How improper, then, it must be to reason as though baptize had only one absolute and exclusive sense; and from such unsound premises, to dictate the precise form in which alone we can observe a Christian duty.

What is most important for us to ascertain, is, the sense in which baptize is used in the New Testament; for it is an undoubted fact that some Greek words are used in the classics, and in Holy Scripture, in somewhat different senses. When our Missionaries translate the Bible into foreign languages, they are obliged to use many words in entirely new senses, because they are applied to entirely new subjects. Even in common parlance words acquire new and conventional meanings. If the proper mode of baptism must be determined by the meaning of the word that designates it, it must be the meaning belonging to the word in the dialect of the New Testament; and not that attached to it by heathens. The ideas of heathens on theological subjects were very unlike those of the sacred writers, so that the sacred use of Greek words, and the classical use, are often very different. 'We deny without hesitation,' says Ernesti, pp. 56 & 7, 'that the diction of the New Testament is pure Greek; and contend that it is modelled after the Hebrew; not only in single words, phrases, and figures of speech, but in the general texture of the language.' Professor Stuart in his notes on Ernesti, and Dr. G.

* They are the following:—Bathe. Besmeared. Broken. Cleanse. Coloured. Cooled. Covered. Crushed. Destroyed. Defiled. Dip. Disguised. Drowning. Ducking. Dye. Enfeebles. Fills Hiding. Imbue. Infected. Involve. Lost. Oppressed. Ornamented. Overcome. Overpowered. Overwhelmed. Plied. Plunged. Poisoned. Polluted. Popped. Poured. Put. Pushing. Quenching. Ruined. Soaks. Sprinkle. Stain. Sleep. Stick. Submersed. Sunk. Sweetened. Tempered. Variegated. Washed. Wetted. Wrecked. See Modern Immersion not Scripture Baptism. p. 116.

Campbell in his Preliminary Dissertations, have shown that the Greek of the New Testament is a peculiar idiom; that words are used in senses in which they never occur in profane authors; that they acquired a strictly Jewish sense among the Jews; and such words, applied as they are to new subjects, and new ordinances, are to be interpreted by Jewish customs and modes of thought, rather than by the rules and Lexicons of classic Greek. Professor Stuart also states that classical usage can never be very certain in respect to the meaning of a word in the New Testament; and he asks, 'Who does not know that a multitude of Greek words have received their colouring and particular meanings from the Hebrew, and not from the Greek classics?' Dr. Macknight also, in his Preliminary Essays, affirms the same facts; and he says that following the idiom of their mother tongue, the Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic, the sacred writers naturally affixed to some Greek words the senses of corresponding Hebrew words. The word flesh has but one meaning in the classics, but in the New Testament it has many meanings. In the pagan classics, church (*ekklesia*,) is the meaning of a political meeting, and even of a tumultuous assembly. Justification, (*dikaïoma*) is the establishment of a person's innocence. Angel, (*angelos*) means a courier, delegate, or messenger, even though he were an errand boy. God, (*Theos*) is applied to idols, demons, princes and magistrates. Many other words denote quite different ideas in the New Testament and in heathen authors. So different is the Christian vocabulary to that of the classics, that it is necessary to have Lexicons of the New Testament. Indeed, every tyro in biblical criticism is aware of this. If, therefore, it were possible to prove that baptizo meant to dip, as it is used by pagans, it would by no means follow that that is the sense in which it is used in the New Testament, which is the great question at issue.

It is actual use, and not etymology, that must determine the Christian sense of baptizo. All the labour expended to prove that it is used in the classics to denote the condition of being submerged in water, is labour lost, because that is what we never deny. The great question is, what is the sense in which baptizo is used in the New Testament, in reference to a Christian rite? That can be ascertained only in the New Testament itself. The object of the ordinance, the spirit of Christianity, and the circumstantial descriptions of the actual observance of baptism by holy and inspired men, together with incidents and correspondences, will aid us in the attempt to decipher the true sense in which the word is used.

Immersionists have conducted us with great zeal through the works of pagan poets, moralists, philosophers, and historians, in search of bapto and baptizo; but these wanderings do not conduct us to the New Testament sense of baptizo. We find indeed that even the pagans have not always made these sister verbs plunge over head in deep water. They also washed, cleansed, overwhelmed, dyed, stained, sprinkled, smeared, tinged, tempered metals, oppressed, &c., &c. Indeed they were verbs of almost all work. Though their most frequent employment among heathens was aquatic, they certainly were amphibious creatures, and they sometimes worked without going near to water. After they were imported into Judea, it is in evidence that they performed the emblematical ablutions of the law by sprinkling. Baptizo having been naturalized for some time, and taken into the sacerdotal order, entered into the service of John, in sprinkling vast numbers of people; and it was afterwards promoted to the august dignity of being the Saviour's ministrator, in connexion with water, and the descent and agency of the Holy Spirit. Its work has been performed more or less by sprinkling ever since.

Some of the ancients, who loved bodily exercises and much service, and who like Peter desired to be washed all over, not satisfied with an emblematical sprinkling, required it to dip three times over, and afterwards to sprinkle, as the finish and climax of its work. It has sprinkled innumerable millions in the name of the Holy Trinity. It is now sprinkling all over the world, even in those cold latitudes where few, if any immersionist missionaries are found to dip; and, notwithstanding the vehement protests of those who love to plunge religiously, it will go on to sprinkle unborn millions, until the archangel's trumpet shall proclaim the advent of the supreme Judge of the world.

We maintain that the New Testament is its own true expositor of this word. We will learn in the school of the classics, and sit at the feet of the Septuagint,—which is a valuable interpreter of its own tongue, as it was spoken three hundred years before Christ, but our only absolutely certain guide to New Testament truth is the New Testament itself, in the inspired words in which was written. What did Pindar, Plato, Homer, Aristotle, Hippocrates, or Xenophon, or even the Seventy, know of Christianity, that they should have used words in the sacred sense, when writing on entirely different subjects, and hundreds of years before the New Testament was written?

Baptisma having been used in reference to the sprinklings under the law, in a similar general sense to sanctification, was used to designate a Christian ordinance in which the same rite is observed; just as the Lord's Supper designates the ordinance in which we eat a mere crumb of bread and sip a mere drop of wine; and though it be observed so early in the morning, as to be really a breakfast rather than a supper. Neither of these designations describes any necessary mode of administration.

In the English and other languages there are

many words which have passed through greater transitions of meaning than *baptisma*, and in much less time. A careful and candid consideration of the facts of the New Testament must lead us to deny that *baptizo*, as it is used in reference to a Christian rite, ever signifies to dip at all, and much less to dip only. Mr. Greenfield, in his *Lexicon of the New Testament*,—which stands high in the estimation of learned men, and in compiling which he consulted those of Parkhurst, Schlenuser, and especially Wahl, gives its New Testament primary sense as being to wash, to perform ablution, and to cleanse; which may be done in several ways.

The command to baptize is not a specific command to sprinkle, or to perform any other precisely defined act; but to sprinkle or shed forth water, in the name of the Holy Trinity, is to obey the command to baptize, and to symbolize the spiritual ends of the law of baptism: whereas to immerse is not. Our Lord used *baptizo* not as a specific but as a generic word, like the word 'go' in the same command. Neither of those words is expressive of any one determinate and specific mode of action; but of an action which may be variously observed, to answer the important and spiritual ends of the law. Thus to 'go' and preach the gospel; a minister may walk, run, sail, or ride in various ways; and equally fulfil the generic command to 'go.' To go is to proceed from one place to some other; irrespective of the precise manner of going. In like manner to baptize is to apply water to the subject of baptism in any mode, to answer certain spiritual objects; but it is never to put the person into the water and submerge him therein. The word 'sanctify' had a similar generic sense in the Levitical law. It was applied to the rites of purification by sprinkling, HEB. IX. 13.; but the word rendered to sanctify, did not specify that particular mode of sanctification. To render that generic term by one that has a specific sense, in

all places in which it is used, would make many of them read as absurdly as it would be absurd to substitute dipping and dip, for baptism and baptize. We have no English word that exactly answers to the meaning of baptizo, and it is therefore wisely transferred, and Anglicised, instead of being translated. It does not denote any one absolute and precise form of applying water; as to paint does not denote the laying on of any certain colour. It designates the ordinance rather than describes the action; and is expressive of the spiritual sentiment, rather than of the visible and formal rite: that must be learned, not from etymology, but from the form actually observed by the apostles and others under divine superintendence. It denotes a symbolical purification; and refers specially to the thing signified by the outward rite. The descent of water, be it much or little, from the administrator to the subjects, symbols forth the descent and agency of the Spirit on the human mind. Any form of affusion, observed by a Christian administrator on a proper subject, and in the name of the Holy Trinity, is a true baptism; but sprinkling pure water, as being an appropriate and convenient form, was the form observed? It answers every end of the sacred ordinance. It is an ancient, practicable, unostentatious, seemly, sufficient, and divinely instituted rite; having been specifically enjoined by God, as a symbol of purifying grace: and there is every reason to believe that it was observed, not only in the temple services and in all the purifications from legal defilement; but that it was also administered by John, by our Lord, and by his apostles.

It has been objected, that we cannot prove that baptizo was used in this generic sense before the times of the New Testament. Suppose we were to admit that, what then; if we prove it to have been its sense at the institution of this ordinance, and subsequently? It is only one of many words which,

as they designate new ideas, institutions, and doctrines, are used in the Gospel in a somewhat conventional sense. Before such an objection can have the least weight, it must be proved that such words as God, church, angel, justification and the like, before mentioned, are used by pagans and others in a strictly Christian sense. Greek pagans could not have used words in their Christian sense, when they were ignorant of Christian ordinances and doctrines. There has been no clear and certain evidence adduced to show that baptizo is used in the gospel to denote immersion; but there is abundant evidence, which will hereafter be adduced, to prove that it does not.

As the immersion theory is held mainly on the assumption that baptizo, in its Christian sense, always means to dip,—for if it ever means anything else, exclusive immersionism falls to the ground—the above principles and facts must shatter if they do not overturn it. Those which follow must, we think, entirely demolish it.

Before we proceed to New Testament narratives of this ordinance, the religious purifications of the law must be examined; and also sundry instances of baptism; and the truth which baptism mainly symbols forth.

RELIGIOUS PURIFICATIONS UNDER THE LAW BY SPRINKLING.

Those purifications certainly were not Christian baptism; but they were in some sense analogous to it, as the idea they suggested to the mind was that of religious purity.

If things or persons were actually unclean, they were washed in as much water as was necessary, and in the mode that was most convenient for making them clean; but when the washing was only emblematical of religious purity, sprinkling water on the object was enjoined, that being amply sufficient for the

purpose. Little water did as well as much water would have done, and was also more economical and convenient; and being sprinkled, it denoted the descent of purifying grace from the person of the Divine Administrator.

In some instances, while religious purity was thus set forth by sprinkling, the person who had to be cleansed was directed, for personal cleanliness, to wash his clothes, and—as our version renders it—to ‘bathe’ himself. This ‘bathing’ may seem to have sanctioned immersion. If it did so, it was for the removal of ‘the filth of the flesh,’ and not for an emblematical cleansing. But there is really no injunction to immerse in the word rendered ‘bathe.’ The original Hebrew is *rachatz*. (רחץ) In no one instance in which, according to our version of the law of Moses, a person is commanded to ‘bathe’ himself, is the Hebrew word *tebal*, (טבל) which commonly means to dip, (often for the purpose of sprinkling,) employed. In each case *kebas* (כבס) is used in reference to the clothes, and *rachatz* in reference to the person; the Hebrew having two words which denote to wash, and the English but one. They both are generic terms, and mean to wash in any mode. Mr. Pilkington, quoted by Parkhurst in his Hebrew Lexicon, remarks that *kebas* denotes a washing which pervades and penetrates the substance of a thing, as the clothes; and that *rachatz* expresses that kind of washing which cleanses the surface only, as a cup, or the body. Neither of them has the meaning of *tebal*, to dip. The ‘bathings’ under the law therefore were not immersions, but washings of the body simply, to make it clean. Our translators have used the word ‘bathe,’ probably for the sake of elegance in the style, by avoiding the two frequent use of wash. When it occurs alone, it is rendered wash, and sometimes when the idea of immersion cannot be included, as in Ex. xxix. 4, where Moses is commanded to *rachatz* Aaron and his sons at the door of the tabernacle;

and in Deut. xxi. 6, where the elders are directed to *rachatz* their hands over a heifer.

Moreover, these bathings were performed by the individuals themselves. Whenever religious purification was set forth, and a priestly administrator was employed, the form was sprinkling. When a person had to be actually washed, instead of making a public exhibition of it before a promiscuous assembly, to which public attention was called by previous announcement, it was done, as was meet, in private, and God said 'Let him wash—or *rachatz*—himself.' Sprinkling was used to cleanse the Levites; 'Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them. Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, &c.' NUM. VIII. 6 & 7. Sprinkling cleansed the leper upon his recovery; 'And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean.' LEV. XIV. 7. Sprinkling was indispensable to the cleansing of a person who was polluted by contact with the dead; as is expressly and repeatedly commanded. See NUMBERS XIX. 13. 18. 19. 20. A house, when polluted by the contagion of leprosy, was cleansed in the same manner, as was commanded by Moses in Leviticus xiv. 51; and so were vessels and tents. NUM. XIX. 18. In Nehemiah's time, the priests, the Levites, and the people, and also the gates and walls of the city, were all religiously purified, NEH. XII. 30.; and this could only have been done by sprinkling, which was deemed and declared to be sufficient as an emblematical cleansing. Such a circumstance as a priest dipping a man, or a woman, to set forth a religious purification, or to cleanse from legal defilement, is not to be found in the Bible. There is not a single precedent, nor one word of law to sanction such a practice; nor can an instance of one person cleansing another from defilement be found without sprinkling. Whoever

was unsprinkled was unclean ; as we read in the Levitical law. See NUM. XIX. 20. All the divers baptisms of the law, were enjoined in the wilderness, where water was so scarce that a miracle had to be wrought to supply water for drink ; the frequent immersions of such immense numbers of people as had to be often purified, must therefore have been impracticable ; and yet, during the whole forty years that they abode there, though they complained of wanting water to drink, we never read of a complaint about the scarcity of water to perform the religious rites ; and for this obvious reason, that very small quantities were required.

In the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus,—which may be fairly quoted to show the sense in which a word was used at the time when that book was written,—the persons that were cleansed by sprinkling, from defilement by contact with the dead, are said to have been baptized. (*baptizomenos*) XXXIV. 25. In this case the word is *baptizo*, and it is used in special reference to religious cleansing by sprinkling. Numb. XIX. 14. 19. Even if it includes the washing of the clothes and of the body, it certainly does not refer to immersion, but the reference to sprinkling is unquestionable. Whoever was emblematically washed by sprinkling was baptized, in the generic and Jewish sense of the word. God never appointed the submersion of the whole body by an administrator as a purifying rite, and therefore it could never have been observed as such. If it be true, as some writers affirm, that in later times a practice grew up of Gentile proselytes being immersed, it is clear that God never enjoined it ; for he twice said, expressly, ‘One law, and one manner, shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.’ Lev. XXIV. 22, & Numb. XV. 16. Such a custom, if it actually existed, must have originated in the national prejudices, pride, and sanctimoniousness of the Jews. The Jewish proselytes moreover put themselves under

water. This merely human custom, of which tradition speaks, had no connexion whatever with Christian baptism, and was entirely unauthorized. If God did not deem dipping a suitable mode of representing legal and spiritual purification under the law, why should he under the gospel, which professed not to institute any burdensome rites, but to do away with them all? The visible signs and services of Christianity were suggested by, and derived from the former dispensation. The ordinances of baptism and the sacred supper correspond, both in form and design, with the purifying rite, and the paschal festival of the Israelites; only that they have a simpler form, and a higher signification.

Sprinkling having been solemnly and repeatedly appointed by God, as a sufficient and appropriate symbol of purification, why should it not be so still? If it was then true and proper, why should it not now and always be so? If immersion was not then instituted, as an appropriate type of purifying grace, how has it become so since? Where can you find a vestige of authority for such a practice, except in the alleged pagan sense of baptizo, which is not the Christian sense. Even if sprinkling water, as a religious rite, had been superseded by a burdensome form, it must be entitled to respect, as a relic of a venerated though obsolete law, and as an institution of God; but as there is no sufficient proof that it has been superseded, and as there is abundant evidence that it has been perpetuated as Christian baptism, it must surely be wrong for a Christian to reject an ordinance which God himself instituted, and to magnify the importance of being submerged in water; and especially as there is no valid evidence whatever to prove that he appointed such a practice. Had Christians been commanded to baptize themselves, the precise form to be observed would have been less clear; but as the rite is solemnized by an administrator, and as God had specifically enjoined

sprinkling only to be thus administered, and never directed one person to immerse another, the baptism of the New Testament, in which the purifying rite is transferred, is not by immersion but sprinkling.

As the purifying rite was solemnized by sprinkling, the word *rantizo*,—to sprinkle, is used in the Scripture, by the Apostle Paul, in the sense of to purify. Heb. x. 22. & ix. 13. And thus when the Lord said by Ezekiel, in xxxvi. 25, ‘I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you,’ he used the words sprinkle and cleanse in much the same sense. God has not said that being plunged in water symbolizes a spiritual purification, though men have said so; but in both Testaments the rite of sprinkling denotes cleansing. Time cannot have transmuted that divine truth into an error. The thing symbolized remains the same, then why should the symbol have been changed? In the absence of proof to the contrary, sprinkling must now be as proper an emblem of cleansing as it was when first the rite was instituted; and consequently it must be the true mode of baptism.

Paul employs a somewhat similar mode of expression to that of Ezekiel, in Heb. x. 22, where he speaks of ‘Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed (*léloumenoi* from *louo*) with pure water.’ The sprinkling of the heart is a figure, derived from the rite of sprinkling as a symbol of cleansing. The ancient priests sprinkled blood as a symbol of the atonement, by which guilt and condemnation are removed from the conscience; and water to denote the purification of the soul and body from the defilement of sin. Our Lord used the word *léloumenos*, in John XIII. 10, in the sense of an emblematical washing. ‘He that is washed &c., is clean every whit.’ In Rev. i. 5, *lousanti*,—‘Washed from our sins in his blood,’ denotes that cleansing which was symbolized by sprinkling, and which the Holy

Spirit has described as 'The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.' 1. Pet. i. 2. As the Apostle Paul, in the above passage, speaks of the spiritual entrance of believers into 'the holiest' he alludes to the ceremonial washings of the priests before they entered the holy place. Those washings are not said to have been by immersion. They were commanded to wash (*rachatz*) without reference to the mode. A brass laver stood between the court of the people and the altar, like a pagan perirranterion, or a Christian font. The vessel with consecrated pure water, at the entrance of pagan temples, in which, as Pliny says, (Hist. Nat. Book xv. c. 30,) there was a branch of laurel, with which the priests sprinkled themselves and all who approached for worship, was probably derived from the laver of purification; and the papal holy water, at the entrance door, had a similar derivation. Moses, Aaron, and his sons, washed their hands and feet thereat whenever they went into the tent of the congregation, or near to the altar. Exod. xxx. 17—21, & xl. 30—32. This was an emblematical washing, a purification from legal defilement. No priest could have gone to minister in public at the altar with an unclean skin. The sacerdotal race of Israel were not so averse to cleanliness, as to render it necessary for God to appoint a public ablution of their persons, near to the altar, whenever they ministered before him. They were required to wash, not to remove 'the filth of the flesh,' but as a purification from 'the sins of the flesh,' when they appeared before the Holy One of Israel. God never commanded either priests or people to immerse their bodies, or their limbs, in token of purification. The water of the laver was, 'therein' but the washing of the priest was 'thereat,' or out of. When we, or our children, are brought to the laver of baptism, we are baptized 'thereat,' or out of, and not 'therein.' In speaking of our hearts being sprinkled, and our bodies being washed with pure water, the Apostle as-

sociates purity and its appointed symbol together, and each elucidates the other. Both Moses and Paul, in speaking of the body being washed, employ a generic and not a modal word; but Moses has distinctly described the emblematical washing of the body in other places; and the Apostle represents purity of heart by sprinkling, as though the emblematical washing of the body among Christians, were also by sprinkling. As Christians never sprinkled except when they baptized, sprinkling and not plunging is Christian baptism.

This celebrated word baptizo was used in the time of our blessed Lord in reference to the religious ablutions under the law by sprinkling. He and his apostles would of course use this verb, when speaking Greek, in the sense in which they found it thus frequently used. Indeed it is very evident that Paul did so in Heb. ix. 10, where, speaking of Jewish purifications, he calls them 'divers baptisms,' (*baptismois*) because they were solemnized on divers subjects, with divers elements, and for divers purposes, rather than in divers modes. In the next eleven verses the Apostle describes the mode of these 'divers baptisms,' as sprinkling, no less than three times. It has been said that 'divers baptisms' should be rendered divers immersions; but if so, how came the Apostle, when he described the mode, to speak of them thrice as acts of sprinkling? and how can such a rendering as DIVERS immersions agree with the opinion that 'one baptism,' in Eph. iv. 3, means ONE immersion, as denoting one mode? These two renderings contradict each other, both being untrue. If the 'divers baptisms' refer to divers modes, sprinkling was unquestionably one. These baptisms, the Apostle affirms, were imposed by God, but he never imposed immersion, and consequently immersion cannot, in this place, be denominated a baptism; but sprinkling is baptism, Paul himself, as well as Moses, being the expositor.

In the New Testament, baptism is never alluded to as a novelty, but is spoken of as a rite well known and understood. No explanation is given of its meaning, as it required none; it being commonly used in reference to the emblematical washings of the law by sprinkling. They were described in the Old Testament, why then should they be described again in the New? As the rite of sprinkling was simply transferred to the gospel, as this ancient and common, and divinely instituted rite of a former dispensation, was adopted and continued in the latter, no formal description of it was required; but simply the name that was applied to it in a conventional and well understood sense. If dipping had been appointed, it would have been such a novel institution, that the precise form, and the reasons for its appointment, would have been laid down, together with directions for its decent observance. But we have no such records; we have therefore no reason to suppose that such a practice was instituted as a Christian ordinance; but we have many reasons to believe that it was not.

SEVERAL EXAMPLES OF BAPTISM.

THE BAPTISM AT THE RED SEA.—In 1 Cor. x. 2, we are informed, that when the Israelites went from Egypt to the wilderness, they ‘Were all baptized (*ebaptisanto*) unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;’ that is to say, they were initiated, by a baptism, into the dispensation of which he was the earthly head. This baptism cannot be a figure of the passage through the sea, for that is described as a distinct fact in the previous verse. Had it been said that the Egyptians were baptized in the sea, the word *ebaptisanto* must have been understood to mean immersed or overwhelmed, as they were all drowned. But though completely immersed, they are not said to have been baptized; but all the Israelites were baptized though not one of them was im-

mersed, for they all passed over the bed of the sea on dry ground. To be baptized therefore is not necessarily to be immersed. How then were the undipped multitudes baptized? The narratives of their passage through the sea, supply the probable, if not certain answer to this question. A strong east wind was employed by the Lord to divide the sea, and during the whole of that remarkable night it blew directly against them, (as an examination of the map will show,) both as they were on the coast and as they went through the sea. This strong east wind must have caused great commotion in the sea while dividing it. Accordingly in Psalm LXXVII. 16, it is said, in reference to this event, 'The depths also were troubled.' The natural consequence must have been, that the people were sprinkled with spray from the agitated waters. This was the only way in which they came in contact with the water of the sea, or that the water came in contact with them; and being thus sprinkled they were baptized by and with—for *en* often signifies by and with—the sea.

As the Israelites were not immersed in the sea, so neither were they in the cloud; for in 1. Cor. x. 1, the Apostle Paul distinctly affirms that they were 'UNDER the cloud;' and in Psalm cv. 39, it is said that God 'Spread a cloud for a covering.' The vapours of this cloud, being condensed in their descent, fell on them in drops; such being the natural action of a cloud. We are therefore informed that, upon this occasion, when God's way was in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and when he led his people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron, not only were the depths troubled, but 'The clouds also poured out water.' Psalm LXXVII. 17.

This profuse baptism was an act of great compassion to the Israelites, for rain falls but seldom, and in very small quantities in Egypt, the land being irrigated by the annual overflow of the Nile; and they had had a long, rapid, and exhausting march before

a pursuing enemy, and under the burning atmosphere of an Egyptian sky. Moreover, as during that eventful night, a drying hot east wind, such as often proceeds from the desert over Egypt, blew violently upon them, to divide the sea, it was a great mercy to them that they were refreshed with spray from the fearfully agitated waters, and with cooling showers from the cloud which hung over them. Probably the Psalmist, in his grateful review of the journey from Egypt through the wilderness, refers to this copious baptism, when he says, 'Thou O God didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary.' Psalm LXVIII. 9.

The facts of this baptism can never be accommodated to the immersion theory. The simple facts alone must determine the meaning of the word *ebaptisanto*; and they clearly prove that it does not denote a dipping, but a profuse sprinkling of spray and rain. It is of no consequence to our argument whether they were baptized for a typical, sacramental, spiritual, or whatever other purpose. The only question now at issue relates to the mode. Spray from the sea, and rain from the cloud that was spread over them, descended on them; and this descent of sprinkled water is called a baptism. It is so called, not by a heathen who lived centuries before Christ, nor by some superstitious Greek Father who lived centuries after him, but in the New Testament, and by the holy and inspired apostle Paul. The word *baptizo*, therefore, in the Christian vocabulary, is used in reference to a descent of sprinkled water in this instance, and if in this, why should it not be used in a similar sense in other instances

THE BAPTISM OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR. It is stated in DAN. IV. 33, and in v. 21, that when this humbled monarch dwelt like an ox in the fields, he was baptized, (*ebaphe*) or wet with the dew of heaven. Was he therefore dipped in a 'baptistry' of dew every morn-

ing, as he lived in the open air? No object is ever naturally plunged or dipped in dew. The vapours which exhale from the earth in the heat of the day, are condensed in the cool hours of the night, and especially in the early morning, and they form and hang in drops. Dew always descends. Had it fallen upon the afflicted monarch as profusely as a shower, the mode would have been the same; and it was not the dipping of the object into the element, but the descent of the element upon the object. His person and garments were sprinkled with dew, like the grass around him in the fields. It descended, gathered, and hung about him in drops. Thus sprinkled with dew he was baptized; so that a person is *ebaphe*, or baptized, when he is sprinkled as with dew. Indeed some ancient writers called Christian baptism holy dew. But would a 'Baptist; consider himself baptized if condensed vapour gently descended upon him until his clothes were saturated with water, as the king was baptized? if so what would become of the beloved opinion that baptism is a burial and resurrection?

SUNDRY JEWISH BAPTISMS.—The disciples, after the example of the Lord, observed the rites of the law, but they did not follow the tradition of the elders. We are told in Mark VII. 2-4, that the Pharisees found fault with them, because they saw them eat with defiled, that is to say, not with unclean, but 'unwashed hands.' 'For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not; holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from market, except they wash, they eat not.' The disciples had neglected the rite of purification. The censure of the Pharisees proceeded, not from a regard to cleanliness, but from a sanctimonious affectation of superior piety. There was no reason to complain that the disciples had unclean hands, but only that they had not purified them according to tradition. The word first rendered wash is *nipsontai*, from *nipto*,

which denotes a partial washing only; the other word is *baptisantai*. Thus these forms of *nipto* and *baptizo*, are used in a synonymous sense, as though they both denote the same purification before meat. This opinion is confirmed by the fact that, while the Pharisees complained that the disciples had not washed before eating, in Luke XI. 38, a Pharisee complained—though he had not invited him to take a bath—that Jesus had not baptized (*ebaptisthe*) before dinner; the baptism being a rite which each guest might observe as he entered the house, or went to the table, without invitation or aid. As the above two words are used to designate the same action, they must have the same meaning; and as *nipto* denotes a partial washing, so must *baptizo*. Surely the Pharisee did not expect the Lord to plunge himself over head before dinner? His reply, that they baptized the outside only of cups, shews that it was a ceremonial baptism that was spoken of, and that it was not an immersion. The Pharisee did not complain that he was unclean but irreligious, and he showed that their piety was merely superstition and hypocrisy.

In washing the hands to make them clean, the Jews did not always dip them in water. A common mode was by having water poured on them, and rubbing them as the water flowed. This mode was so common that a reference to it sufficed to denote the office of a servant. Thus Elisha is described as one who poured water on Elijah's hands. II Kings III. 11. In Jewish, Persian, and Arabian entertainments, water is poured on the hands of the guests that they may wash them; the obvious reason of this mode being, that the hands may not touch impure water. Homer repeatedly refers to this mode, and especially in the religious lustrations. In Jewish worship, the minister's hands are sometimes affused; and Mr. Isaac, in p. 132 of his *Ceremonies of the Jews*, states that they pour a little water over each hand in the morning, as a religious purification. Various learned

rabbis affirm the same thing. Even had the Jews' hands been dipped as a baptism, their bodies were not; why then should the mere use of the word baptize, lead them to suppose that there was no other way to be baptized than by complete immersion?

When the Jews returned from market, they ate not until they were baptized. Their whole bodies were not defiled in the market, but if they were, they might have been cleansed without being submerged. That baptizo here denotes a religious ablution of the hands is clear, because it is mentioned—in reference to a special occasion,—in connection with washing the hands oft; because the hands only could have been defiled by touching common things at market; and because entire immersion would have required more time, trouble, and water than could have been spared for such a purpose, and so often. The law did not require these baptisms, nor did cleanliness render them necessary. They were observed 'after the tradition of the elders.' The elders multiplied the occasions and subjects of purification, but they are not charged with departing from the rite which God originally instituted. As these purifications are denominated baptisms, it is certain that baptism, in its Jewish sense, does not denote an immersion of the body, but such a ceremonial and emblematical washing as the law prescribed.

It appears from Mark VII. 3, that all the Jews baptized before eating. The Sadducees were not men who would make more ado about rites than was necessary, even if the Pharisees were. Though Jesus was not a Pharisee, his host marvelled that he had not baptized before dinner, because the practice was universal, though none of the poor could have had baths. That they all should have been dipped every noon was not possible, and still less before every meal. Or if it had been usually possible, the millions whom Josephus describes as having been present in Jerusalem, at the Passover, could not have

immersed before dinner. These baptisms were purifications of the hands, not to make them actually clean,—for who can suppose that our Lord sat down to dine with unclean hands?—but religiously clean. As ‘all the Jews,’ when they spoke Greek, used the word in that sense, they could not have understood the command to be baptized to mean that they must be submerged in water, and nothing else, but that it referred to a symbolical rite, and that an old ordinance was transferred to a new dispensation. The Jews were in the constant habit of baptizing themselves, and their furniture, and utensils, so that they were a nation of baptists; but Judea must have been such a country as Holland, for them to have been a nation of immersionists.

Mark also states that the Jews observed the baptisms (*baptismous*) of cups, pots, and brazen vessels. VII. 4. If these baptisms had been intended to make the vessels actually clean, they would not have been mentioned in the word of God, as being peculiar to the Jews; since all nations under heaven cleanse their household utensils, when they require it. But they were emblematical purifications, after tradition, and not after the law. As our Lord twice affirmed, in Matt. XXIII. 25, and Luke XI. 39, that they washed the outside only of the baptized cups, they could not have immersed them. These baptisms are mentioned to show, not that the Pharisees were a singularly clean people, but that, though they rejected the weightier matters of the law, they were so hypocritical as to appear to be singularly scrupulous, in having every thing at their homes as religiously free from defilement, as they affected to be in their own persons.

It is also stated in Mark VII. 4, that they baptized their *klinon*, or couches, on which they reclined at the table when eating. The couches were of a size to accommodate a small number of persons, as from three to five. These baptisms of couches were

not such washings as make things clean, or they would not have been mentioned as being peculiar to the Jews, nor would the Lord have censured Jewish rites if the object had been cleanliness. Their motive was superstitious, and their authority was 'the tradition of the elders,' who, with the characteristic zeal of Pharisees, were not satisfied with the purification of such things as God commanded, but applied the purifying rite to the ordinary utensils and events of life. The religious purifications were never performed by immersion. No man can entertain such an opinion, unless his mind be biassed by a favourite theory. Apart from such washings as were intended to make things literally clean, sprinkling was the mode of purification. Indeed God had expressly commanded tents and vessels to be sprinkled, when they were religiously defiled. Num. xix. 11.* The gospel histories accuse the Jews of increasing the subjects of purification, but not of altering the mode. Both the divinely instituted, and the traditional and unauthorized purifications, by sprinkling, are denominated baptisms.

These examples show that baptizo is used to denote an emblematical rite, and not an immersion. If it had been used in the sense of to dip, we might have expected it to have been used in those places in which the act of dipping is distinctly described; as when Lazarus was desired to dip his finger in water, to cool the torments of Dives; and when our

* The only specific direction to immerse is in Lev. xi. 32. God commanded that if an unclean dead creature, as a snail, tortoise, mouse, lizard, &c., fell upon any vessel, raiment, sack, &c., in which work was done, it should be put into water. 'So shall it be cleansed.' If a man touched such a creature he became unclean, but it was not commanded that he should be put into water. This immersion was not only an emblematical cleansing, it was necessary to cleanse the vessels, sacks, &c., from any fetid odour, and to make them sweet and clean.

Num. xxxi. 23. 'Go through the water' plainly means 'Go through the purifying rite.'

Lord dipped the sop and gave it to Judas. But baptizo is not used in such places. A formation of bapto is employed to express the act of dipping, though it is not limited to that sense. Thus Dives prayed that Lazarus might *bapse* the tip of his finger. Luke xvi. 24. In Matt. xxvi. 23, Jesus said of Judas 'He that *bapsas* his hand with me in the dish, &c.' In Mark xiv. 20, it is *embaptomenos*; and in John xiii. 26. *bapsas* and *embapsas*. If any similar form of bapto had been used in our Lord's command,—instead of *baptizontes*, or in the narratives of baptism, it might have been argued that it meant to dip the bodies of all who were discipled, as truly as it meant for Lazarus to dip his finger, and Jesus to dip the sop. but in the New Testament a form of bapto is used, when to partially dip is meant, and *buthizo* when a complete immersion is meant, as in Luke v. 7, and 1. Tim. vi. 9; but baptizo is never used in such senses. Baptizo belongs to religion, and is used in reference to those religious rites which were observed according to the express command of God, by sprinkling. It is a generic and not a modal word, like sanctify, ordain, consecrate, worship, &c. Baptism is the ordinance and sprinkling the mode of its observance.

THE BAPTIZED VESTURE. In Rev. xix. 13, the glorified Redeemer is represented as being clothed in a vesture baptized in blood. Our translators have rendered it 'dipped in blood;' but no fact or doctrine can be altered by the uninspired use of an English word. The original is baptized in blood; the word being *bebummenon*, a formation of bapto. Now this baptized vesture refers to one of two things. It may refer to the vesture which he wore on the cross at the time of his crucifixion. In that case the fact alone can give the correct interpretation of the word baptized. It is a certain fact that his vesture was not dipped in his blood, but that it was rather stained, by being splashed or sprinkled with blood. But if,

as is most probable, the baptized vesture represents him as having come forth from recent conquests, then the true exposition may be found in Is. LXIII. 3. 'Their blood shall be sprinkled on my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.' So that if the baptized vesture were a martial robe, it was not dipped but sprinkled and stained. Accordingly the word baptized is said to be rendered sprinkled in the Syriac, the Ethiopic, the Latin vulgate, and the old Italic version; and Origen, in quoting this passage, has used the word sprinkled in Greek, as though *rantizo* and *bapto*, or sprinkled and baptized, denote the same thing.

A similar instance to the above is found in the writings of Æschylus—an eminent tragic writer of Greece, 400 years B.C. who says, 'This garment, baptized with the sword of Ægisthus, is witness against me.' That baptized garment, like our Lord's vesture, was not immersed but stained with blood.

THE BAPTISM OF JUDITH. Judith XII. 7. This Jewish lady obtained permission to go every night to a fountain to observe her religious duties. She baptized (*ebaptizeto*) herself at, (*epi*) not in the fountain. The soldiers were forbidden to hinder her, but were not forbidden to watch. Can it be supposed that an opulent and polished lady laid aside her raiment, and immersed her person in water, in the open air, and in immediate proximity to a large army of rude and heathen men, and that all the soldiers knew this, when such a periodical ceremony was not required, either by cleanliness, health, or religion? The fountain, as a simple spring, could not have been deep enough for a full sized woman to dip herself in, nor could it have been deemed proper for her to do so, when the water was so precious to the army as drink. To meet some of the difficulties which this case presents to immersionists, Dr. Carson, in pp. 78 & 455, conjures up a 'stone trough,' as a bath for Judith; but such a

conjecture proves nothing. That she was immersed appears very incredible; but the opinion that she observed the purifying rite, with the pure water of the spring, agrees with the place, with her womanly feelings, with Jewish rites, and with the fact that this baptism was connected with prayer, and that after its observance she is said to have been 'clean.' It is as unlikely that baptizo means to dip, as that a pure minded and delicate woman of station would immerse herself in a well at night, close to multitudes of heathen warriors. If she did not dip, the word does not mean to dip.

BAPTIZO TRANSLATED TO DIP.

If immersionists are correct in saying that to baptize is always and only to dip, it must be right to translate baptizo, in its various forms, by that word and its derivatives. So strenuously indeed do our brethren insist upon such translations, that they have formed a new Bible Society, to publish versions in foreign tongues, in which baptize is rendered to dip, or immerse. On the same principle the Greek word 'baptist' from *baptiston* should be relinquished in this country, and some English word as, dipping or immersion, should be employed to designate their churches, magazines, missions, &c.; and of course in the English New Testament, dipping—for no other word so correctly designates their practice,—should be substituted for baptizing. In that case sundry passages would read thus, 'John the DIPPER.' Matt. XI. 12. 'John did DIP you in the wilderness, and preached the DIPPING of repentance.' Mark I. 4. 'I have need to be DIPPED of thee.' Matt. III. 14. 'Unto what then were ye DIPPED? and they said unto John's DIPPING. Acts XIX. 3. 'I DIP you in water unto repentance.' Mat. III. 11. 'I have a DIPPING to be DIPPED with.' Luke XII. 50. 'Can ye be DIPPED with the DIPPING that I am DIPPED with?—with the DIPPING that I am DIPPED withal shall ye be

be DIPPED.' Mark x. 38—9. Being DIPPED with the DIPPING of John.' Luke vii. 29. 'He that believeth and is DIPPED shall be saved.' Mark xvi. 16. 'They were DIPPED, both men and women.' Acts viii. 12. As many as were DIPPED into Jesus Christ, were DIPPED into his death.' Rom. vi. 3. 'By one Spirit we are all DIPPED into one body.' 1. Cor. xii. 13. 'We are buried with him by DIPPING into death.' Rom. vi. 4. 'DIPPED for the dead.' 1. Cor. xv. 29. 'The doctrine of DIPPINGS.' Heb. vi. 2. 'Divers DIPPINGS.' Heb. ix. 10. Such renderings as some of these would interpret the word of God as though its sense were absolutely foolish, not to say absurd. The same may be said of translations from the pagan classics, and the Greek fathers. How very improper then it must be to say that to baptize, both in sacred and profane authors, is always and only to dip; and from thence to enforce immersion as a Christian duty, and to reject from the Lord's table all such as have not been religiously submerged in water, however Christ-like they may be in their spirit and life!

It has been asked how far the true sense of the above passages would be given if, instead of baptize, &c., we were to substitute the word sprinkle. We answer that the word sprinkle would not give the precise sense, because it designates a specific form of applying water, whereas baptizo, being a generic term, does not. To sprinkle is to baptize, however, because the minor is included in the major, but to baptize is not absolutely and specifically to sprinkle. We deny that baptizo, as used in the gospel, designates any precise mode. Like 'Lord's Supper' it is the name of an ordinance, and does not describe any precise form of action. It denotes the whole class of sentiments belonging to the ordinance of baptism, and refers to the use of water as a symbol of spiritual truth. Though it does not specifically mean to sprinkle, it is applied to that

rite in the purifications of the Jews, and as it was observed in the Christian Church. The command was generically to baptize, because the word was not used in a narrow and purely ritual sense, but to include the spiritual objects of the ordinance as well as the sign. The sign is less important than the things signified. Baptism alludes to them all, and it would therefore be incorrect to render it by any word of a specific sense, such as sprinkle or pour. The true mode of baptism is not taught by the name of the ordinance. That is the only true and proper mode which the apostles observed, and which agrees as a symbol with its correspondence.

It has now been shewn that baptizo does not always mean to immerse, even in the classics, but that it has very many other applications; that in the Holy Scriptures it must be understood in a generic sense, and be interpreted by Jewish usages; and that in reference to a Christian ordinance it never means to dip at all, but only to symbolically purify with water. Now as our 'Baptist' brethren rest their view and practice mainly on the alleged meaning of baptizo, what must be thought of the structure that is built on so flimsy a foundation?

IMMERSION DISPROVED BY THE ANALOGY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

If the Lord's supper be solemnized in the right mode, immersion must be a wrong mode of baptism, as there is no agreement in the principles on which two such sacramental forms are founded.

The sacred Eucharist is called the Lord's supper, and yet we do not understand the word 'supper' in its literal, and etymological sense, nor is it employed in that sense in the Holy Scriptures. We all know that it signifies a meal, and amongst the Jews the supper was the principal meal in the day. But in its Christian and ritual sense, it has not its radical and primary but a conventional meaning. Who will say

that a tiny morsel of bread, and a drop or two of wine, constitute a proper supper? We certainly could not live on such meals, and yet, in the received and understood sense of the word, we properly call it a supper; and those small quantities of bread and wine are amply sufficient to answer every end of that holy ordinance. Now if baptism meant immersion as undoubtedly as supper means a meal, it would, even then, be as right to administer drops of water in one ordinance, as drops of wine and crumbs of bread in the other. Those people who dip, because they say that to baptize is to dip, are very inconsistent, even on their own shewing, in not eating a meal at the Lord's table, since a supper certainly is a meal. Inasmuch as very small quantities of bread and wine satisfy the consciences of immersionists, why should they not be satisfied with equally small quantities of water in baptism? and especially as it is impossible to prove that baptism, as used in Scripture, signifies immersion, whereas it is absolutely certain that supper commonly means a meal.

About as little water is necessary and proper in one ordinance as wine in the other.

Instead of making a meal of the sacred Eucharist, because it is called a supper, immersionists, in common with ourselves, plead circumstantial evidence, as well as didactic directions, to shew the proper mode of observing it; and in like manner, in the absence of didactic directions, we plead circumstantial evidence to shew the right mode of baptism. Paul commanded the Corinthians,—who made a similar and as great a mistake respecting the supper as they do respecting baptism, that if any man were hungry he should eat at home, before he went to the Lord's supper. 1 Cor. XI. 34. If the Corinthians or others had fallen into a similar error respecting the baptism as respecting the supper, as immersionists have, and had been unclean, he, acting on the same principle, would undoubtedly have commanded them to have washed at

home, before going to the baptism; for the Lord's baptism is not intended to wash the body, any more than the Lord's supper is to feed the body; it being intended, like some of the rites of the law, to be a symbol of 'The washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' But the mistake respecting baptism was not made until a long time afterwards, when a tide of feeling set in to change the beautifully simple rites of our holy religion into showy ceremonies and vain parade. The Apostle's command, and the fact of the ordinance having been instituted after a substantial meal, show that the supper was to be understood in a conventional sense; and why should not the name of the sister ordinance of baptism be understood in the same way, even if baptism did always mean immersion as used elsewhere, and especially so as it does not?

SHEDDING FORTH, AND NOT IMMERSION, A TYPE OF SPIRITUAL BAPTISM.

Augustine has defined sacraments as being 'Visible words and signs addressed to the eye, rather than to the ear.' Symbols and sounds are two forms of language, and are interpreted by two different senses.

As God is a purely spiritual being and is everywhere present, we cannot suppose that the communications of his Spirit are made in any specific mode, after the manner of men; but it has pleased him to represent purely spiritual and heavenly things by allusions to things material and earthly. As he is, 'high and lifted up,' and as he adapts his modes of speaking to our modes of thought and action, his condescension is represented as a descent; and the gift of the Spirit to men is represented as water springing up in their hearts, in two places as the breathing of life and influence within them, sometimes by the action of fire, most frequently however by the descent of water in various forms, but never by dipping. These are all imperfect types of the influences of the Spirit; but the descent

of water, be it much or little, in showers or drops, by pouring, sprinkling, shedding, falling, &c., may, from its being so generally used, be deemed the most appropriate and most resemblant of all signs and figures. It is that which best aids our conceptions, and illustrates the influence of the Spirit on the mind. It is therefore appointed as a symbol of the spiritual baptism, and the connection between the administration of this ordinance and the giving of the Holy Ghost, is distinctly and frequently adverted to in the Holy Scriptures.

The Spirit may no more be shed, poured, or sprinkled, than the blood of Christ is literally sprinkled on our hearts, to cleanse us from an evil conscience. There is no actual contact with the atoning blood of the immaculate sacrifice. A mind cannot be brought into contact with a material liquid, Do we then impeach the wisdom of God in Heb. xii. 24, and 1 Peter i. 2, where it is called the blood of sprinkling? Certainly not. The description of that which is spiritual is derived from the form and meaning of the appointed symbol. The sign suggested the mode of describing the thing signified. As sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat, sprinkling came to denote atoning and cleansing; and the realized efficacy of the atonement is said to be 'The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; not literally but figuratively.

As the atonement is described in a metaphor borrowed from the form in which it was symbolized, so is the communication of the influences of the Spirit. Water baptism, being a symbol of the baptism of the Spirit, suggested the most easy and natural mode of describing it, and supplied language for that description. We may therefore reason reflexly from the thing signified to the sign, and by the descriptions of the correspondence correctly ascertain the form of the emblem. Those descriptions are such as agree with and arise from affusion, but they never agree with immersion. We are not within the Spirit as an immersed object is

in water. In the baptism of the Spirit there is a descent of the element, as in water baptism. Such words as 'sprinkle,' 'shed forth,' 'poured,' 'fell,' &c., in reference to the Spirit, clearly elucidate the form of the rite from which they are derived; and as they are all derived from affusion, and not one of them from immersion, it is plain that affusion is baptism and immersion is not.

As immersion is not the emblematical baptism, no emblematical description of the influences of the Spirit is derived from it. If it had been, the plunging of the body in water would have suggested a corresponding representation of the soul, in reference to the Holy Spirit. It would not be said that he descended upon us, but that, he being quiescent, we go and are immersed in him. If this be improper and absurd, immersion must be equally so, because an emblem must agree with its correspondence. There is no agreement whatever between immersion, and those representations of the gift and agency of the Spirit, which are derived from water baptism. Not only have we no express command to be plunged over head in water as a religious act, but there is not one clear allusion to the baptism of the Spirit that agrees with such a practice, either in the Old or New Testament. In no one instance has it pleased God to speak of divine influence in a figure that corresponds with the immersionists' mode of symbolizing it; nor can their rite suggest to the mind such a truth as the Scriptures describe, that the Spirit is shed forth. How came it to pass that the narratives of the Spirit's baptism agree with affusion, and that they never agree with immersion, if immersion is right and affusion is wrong?

The reasoning by which it is attempted to represent our baptism as invalid, would, we fear, invalidate the baptism of God. Both the gift and agency of the Spirit, and the use of water as a symbol thereof, are denominated baptism. Thus John said—'I baptize with water,—he shall baptize with the Holy Ghost.'

Baptizo must therefore denote the same action in reference to both. It cannot in the same breath denote two such opposite actions as pouring and plunging. But in the spiritual baptism it certainly does denote pouring, because the Spirit was 'poured out,' it must therefore denote pouring in the water baptism; for the modal description of the spiritual baptism, clearly explains the mode of water baptism, because it is founded thereon.

Since the fulfilment of the promise to baptize with the Holy Ghost is described as being by affusion, the promise could not have been to immerse. The promise was to baptize, in the fulfilment the Spirit was shed forth. When the Spirit was poured out from 'on high,' the disciples were baptized, though they were not dipped. As there must have been an exact correspondence between the promise and its fulfilment, and as the fulfilment was by shedding forth, the promise to baptize must have been one which shedding forth would fulfil. Baptizo must therefore refer to affusion, and not to immersion. If the promise was to dip, it is certain that it never was fulfilled, which no Christian can affirm; so that baptizo does not mean to dip. It must be admitted that to baptize, in the prediction of John and in the promise of Jesus, did not mean to immerse, and that therefore baptism is not immersion; or else it must be maintained, in opposition to the Scriptures, that neither of them has been fulfilled, and that Jesus did not baptize with the Holy Ghost, since the description of what he did entirely disagrees with every mode of immersion. To us it seems impossible to escape this alternative, either to surrender our faith in the veracity of John and of our Lord, or the immersion sense of baptizo, and consequently the practice founded upon it. The former we cannot do, the latter therefore we may and must do.

Christians are baptized by the ordinary influences of the Spirit. Thus all the holy members of the Cor-

inthian church were 'Baptized by one Spirit into one body.' 1 Cor. XII. 13. No Christian is spiritually dipped, nor is the spiritual baptism described in language borrowed from immersion. If it had been, the promise should have been rendered, 'I immerse you in water, but he shall immerse you in the Holy Ghost and in fire.' Luke III. 16. 'Ye shall be immersed, dipped, or plunged in the Holy Ghost, not many days hence,' Acts I. 5; for infinite wisdom employs figures correctly. But that is not God's manner of speaking. He said 'I will POUR out my Spirit upon all flesh.' Joel II. 28. Acts II. 17. 'I will SPRINKLE clean water upon you.' Ezek. XXXVI. 25. 'I will POUR water upon him that is thirsty.' Isaiah XLIV. 3. 'Jesus—having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath SHED FORTH this, &c.' Acts II. 33. 'On the Gentiles also was Poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.' Acts X. 4. 'The Holy Ghost was SHED on us abundantly.' Titus III. 6. &c.

These are reflex terms. They are derived from the sign of the Spirit's gracious work, and as the sign must agree with those descriptions, immersion cannot be the sign. The spiritual truth is appropriately represented by its appointed symbol, *viz.* the shedding forth of water. Water is shed forth when it descends, however small the quantity may be, so that sprinkling is shedding forth; and as it is not the quantity, but the element and mode of administration as an act of cleansing that constitute the type, God appointed it as a proper symbol of the descent and cleansing influence of his Spirit. But immersion is both unauthorized and inappropriate, and indeed it is an unmeaning ceremony.

This argument elucidates the sense in which baptizo is used, and the design and mode of water baptism; and while it shows that affusion has the seal of God's approval, it overturns the merely human practice of immersion. The Spirit is said to be shed forth from the fact that, in baptism, water is shed

forth. Each baptism is administered from above, and not from beneath. The descent of the element upon the object, therefore, is the only true mode of baptism, and not the descent of the object into the element.

JOHN'S BAPTISMS.

Circumstantial evidence will aid us in the attempt to ascertain the true mode of baptism, much more than the etymology or pagan use of a Greek word, which has great latitude of meaning. Facts often afford correct expositions of the senses of particular words. Indeed many truths, both etymological, sacred, and natural, are learned by a careful induction of facts.

It must be here premised that John's baptism, being a baptism unto repentance, and preliminary to the introduction of Christ's kingdom, was not Christian baptism. Persons whom he baptized were therefore baptized again by Paul. Acts xix. 2-5. So that if John had plunged the people, it does not follow that Christ's Ministers did so, since Christ and not John was the author of their baptism. But we think it is morally certain that John did not submerge the people under water; and it is proper that this moral certainty should be established, as immersionists hold a contrary opinion, and often affirm that John dipped, in vindication of their own practice as a Christian rite.

John was by descent a Jewish priest. He, as a priest's son, had been familiar with the purifying rite from a child, and frequently witnessed it. He entered upon his ministry at the age when the Jews entered upon the priesthood. When he officiated no part of the Levitical law was repealed. That law, it has been shown, enjoined sprinkling as the rite to be administered by one person on another. His baptism was not strictly Levitical nor Christian; it was a transition baptism, and stood like a short vestibule

between the two dispensations. If Jesus borrowed the mode of his baptism from John, he also must have borrowed his from Moses; for as a Levite he baptized according to ancient prescription, and the unrepealed law of God.

As baptizo includes the idea of purification, it is used in the Holy Scripture in reference to the action of several elements, as water and fire, and to the agency of the Holy Spirit. A dispute between John's disciples and some Jews about purifying, is stated to have been about baptism. John III. 25-6. Baptism and purifying (*katharismou*) are evidently used to designate the same thing. The Christ was foretold and expected as a purifier, in a spiritual sense. When John appeared performing the symbolical rite of purification upon immense numbers of people, he was supposed by some to be the Messiah,—he being just then expected to appear, who was to purify men from their sins. As he disclaimed that high office, and also denied being Elijah,—whom they, by a literal interpretation of a figure, expected personally to precede Christ, the deputation from the sacerdotal bench at Jerusalem said, 'Why baptizest thou then?' that is as a distinguished purifier of the people. His prophetic attire, his eloquent utterance of burning truth, and his having sprinkled their nation in so short a time, awakened the conjecture that he was the expected Messiah, of whom it was foretold, that he should sprinkle many nations. Is. LI. 15 All men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not.' Luke III. 15. The members of the deputation themselves baptized by sprinkling. They inquired why HE baptized, not why he observed a rite which no administrator was directed to perform. Had he performed the ceremony of dipping, an explanation of such a novel and unauthorized rite would have been demanded and given; but they marvelled that he was a distinguished '*Baptistes*,'* and not that he

* In page 57, line 22, of some copies, the two last letters of this word are, by mistake, printed *ou* instead of *es*.

dipped. Nothing is said about the form, because it was not strange or unusual. They had reason from prophecy to expect that Christ would be a purifier, and that he might therefore perform the purifying rite, but they had no reason to expect that he would plunge people over head in water; such a practice indeed would have been deemed inglorious, and beneath the dignity of 'Messiah the Prince,' who was to be a Priest on his throne. John baptized in a manner agreeable with their high conceptions of the person, state, and dignity of the royal Priest, the King of Israel. He must therefore have baptized in the country, like the members of the sacred hierarchy in the temple, by sprinkling. He baptized '*with water*' not *in*.

John was entitled the '*Baptistes*.' The dipper, or the sprinkler, would have been an undignified designation, as derived from a mere ritual form, whereas the '*Baptistes*,' or Baptist, was an honourable name, and was associated with ideas of reverence, and with the spiritual character of the baptismal rite. It was the generic title of an office in which the spiritual predominated over the visible and formal. Dipper, plunger, or immerser, could have had no spiritual meaning, nor have answered any important object. His official designation, the '*Baptistes*,' was so comprehensive as to include the moral and spiritual ends of the ordinance which he solemnized to so vast an extent, and the character of his peculiar mission to the world as a religious reformer.

A similar meaning obviously belongs to the name of his dispensation and work, 'The baptism of John.' Matt. XXI. 25. Our Lord did not demand in this passage if his sprinkling, and much less if his dipping were from heaven, but his baptism. 'The baptism of John' included his ordinance, preaching, prophecies, and the whole class of sentiments he was commissioned to teach. It denoted what he taught as well as what he did. 'The baptism of John' was

the ministry and dispensation of John. 'Apollos taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.' Acts xviii. 25. A knowledge of the mere mode of the 'baptism of John' would not have qualified him to be a competent teacher, such as he was. 'The baptism which John preached,' Acts x. 37, means the doctrine he taught, and the temporary dispensation of which baptism was the initiatory token. The above names given by our Lord and his disciples to the person and ministry of John, confirm the fact that, in the New Testament, baptism is not a modal but a generic term; and that it designates the ordinance, not the mode. The mode of baptism must be learned from other sources.

That the mode of John's baptism was shedding forth, and not immersion, is clear from the words of Peter, when speaking of the conversion of Cornelius. In Acts x. 44-5, it is said that 'The Holy Ghost FELL on them that heard the word,' and there was 'POURED OUT the gift of the Holy Ghost.' In Acts xi. 15 & 16, Peter rehearsed the circumstances to his brethren, and said; 'The Holy Ghost FELL on them, as on us at the beginning,' on the day of Pentecost. The descent of the Spirit instantly led his mind to recur to the baptism of John, as a figure. 'Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.' The same particle, WITH, is used in reference both to the water and to the Spirit; it must therefore have the same meaning in both places. As they were not baptized in the Spirit, neither did John baptize in water. The affusion of the Spirit was a baptism, and so was the affusion of water. We reason from the clear modal description of the Spiritual baptism, to explain the mode of water baptism. As the Holy Ghost fell, and was poured out, Peter was reminded of John's baptism, as though the water also fell and was poured out. The water, whether much or little, must have

been poured forth by John, as the Spirit is represented to have been poured out by the Lord. There must have been a resemblance between the symbolical and the divine baptism, for one to have reminded Peter of the other. Pouring could never have reminded him of dipping. John baptized the body with water, and Jesus the soul with the divine influence; the specific mode ascribed to the spiritual act, being derived from the visible and formal. The Spirit is said to have been poured upon the heart, in allusion to the water being poured on the head; so that when John baptized, he did not put men under water, but shed it forth upon them.

It is often said that John must have immersed because he 'baptized *in* Jordan.' But he also baptized 'beyond Jordan,' at a place where Jesus subsequently abode. John x. 40. Jesus did not abide in the bed of the river, nor did John baptize there. 'Beyond Jordan' denotes at least some distance from Jordan in the wilderness, were there was no deep water, so that he could not have immersed there; and if not there, why should he at Jordan or Enon?

In Mark i. 9, Jesus is said to have been baptized by John *eis* the Jordan, and as *eis* sometimes means into, it is supposed that he was immersed. If it had been said that he was 'baptized *eis* the water,' this conjecture would have been plausible; but such an expression is not to be found in the New Testament; and *eis*, when put before the name of a place, often means AT that place, as in the following instances: 'She fell down *eis* his feet.' John xi. 32. 'Wash *eis* the pool.' John ix. 7. 'Jesus stood *eis* the shore,' or *at* the sea side. John xxi. 4. As Jordan is a place, *eis* the Jordan means that John baptized *at* the Jordan, as Jesus stood *at* the sea side. Even if *eis* meant into Jordan, it does not mean into the water of Jordan, but within the banks, and therefore it does not favour immersion.

Neither does '*en* Jordan' mean in the water. Sail-

ors do business *in* great waters,' Ps. cvii. 23, but not under them. Joshua says that the Israelites went into Jordan, stood in the midst of Jordan, and came up out of Jordan, though he affirms also that they were not in the water. *En* is so indefinite a word that it has twenty or thirty senses. It means in; at; with; by; for; among; near to; then; while; to; about; &c. &c. Its true sense in any given instance, is not to be determined by the frequency of its occurrence in that sense, but by the scope of the context. When it precedes the names of places it has the sense of *at*. It is correctly rendered *at* more than a hundred times in the New Testament. In multitudes of instances, in the Scriptures and in the classics, it would be absurd to render it by any other word; as '*At* the right hand of God,' an expression which occurs six times in the New Testament; and '*If I keep watch at* the river.' Odyssey v. 466. In Enon, in Bethabara, in the wilderness, and in Jordan, means at those places. Dr. Carson, in p. 339, admits that when Elijah is said to have dwelt *en* the brook Cherith, 1 Kings xvii. 5, it means within the banks of the brook; and why should not *en* Jordan mean the same thing? That it means in the water, has never been proved and never can be; but if it could, it would not mean under the water; for people who wore sandals might conveniently go into water to be sprinkled. John would have baptized not only at but in Jordan if,—as is most probable, he and the baptized were within the banks of the river, and especially if they stood at the water's edge. Indeed God himself spake thus to Joshua,—and I quote this passage not to prove the mode of baptism, but to explain the meaning of '*in* Jordan,'—he said, '*When ye are come to the BRINK of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still IN Jordan.*' Josh. iii. 8. So that in the words of God, *IN* Jordan, and at the *BRINK* of the water, mean the same thing. When John baptized *en* Jordan, it was at the brink of the water, and not un-

der the water; for God himself affirms that standing at the brink of the water of Jordan, is standing in Jordan; who then shall deny it?

When the celebrated missionary-traveller, Dr. Wolfe, was in Mesopotamia, he found a sect of Christians who are called after John the Baptist. In imitation of him they baptize at streams, but they do not immerse in them. The Syrian customs are now much the same as in the days of our Lord. Successive generations in Syria, instead of being 'new and improved editions,' seem to be stereotyped. If then John had dipped in Jordan, his professed followers would probably have done the same thing, through all ages of time until this day. But what is the fact? Dr. Wolfe says, 'The priest or bishop baptize children of thirty days old. They take the child to the banks of a river, a relative or friend holds the child near to the surface of the water, while the priest sprinkles the element upon the child, and with prayers they name the child.' *Journal* vol. 11. p. 311. Baptizing at the river, therefore, does not mean putting under the water. God had commanded the rite of sprinkling to be solemnized at and with 'running water;' Lev. xiv. 5—7. & 50—52. & Num. xix. 17—21; and as Kedron is dry in summer, and might have been dry during the half year in which John baptized so many before he baptized Christ, it is not to be accounted strange that he baptized at the Jordan and at Enon.

As a reason why he baptized at Enon, it is said, 'Because there was much water there.' John III. 23. This is an oft quoted passage in favour of the immersion theory, and Enon is the name of many chapels, though they do not belong to John's disciples. The immersionist mind hovers like a halcyon over the 'much water' of Enon, as though it were a lake as broad as that of Galilee, or a noble stream like the Thames. But it is not said that there was DEEP water there, as though deep water were required

for baptism. Deep water was not required, as it would have been for immersion, nor is deep water mentioned as a reason why Enon was a suitable place for John to exercise his ministry, but 'much water.'

Little and much are words of comparison. What would be 'much water' in a country like Judea, would be little in our rainy and well watered island. Though 'much water' and 'many waters' sometimes refer to waters that are deep and broad, they also refer to small quantities of water. When Hezekiah stopped up the springs of Jerusalem, and the little brook Kedron, to afflict an invading army with thirst, he said as a reason for doing so, 'Why should the king of Assyria come and find MUCH WATER? 2 Chron. xxxii. 4. If the much water of Enon were no more than that of Jerusalem, which was accessible to an army outside of the city,—and there is reason to believe it was less,—there could not have been sufficient water to immerse in; for a stream deep enough to dip in, would be too deep to stop up for a length of time, it if could be stopped up at all.

If it could be proved that in a warm climate, large numbers of people could meet together, far from their homes, and do without any water or with very little, the water of Enon must be supposed to have been wanted principally for baptisms; but if the multitudes who continually thronged around John, in a dry and thirsty land, required 'much water' for other purposes, and they certainly must, it cannot be said that 'much water' was required for baptism only. If there had been no baptisms a good supply of water would have been indispensable. When the people left their homes, in all parts of the kingdom, to repair to the attractive scene of the ministry of John, they might have taken their food with them, but very few of them if any could have carried with them the requisite supply of water for drink. Their feet had also to be frequently washed,

and other ablutions had to be performed; and the beasts of burden, on which the more distant travellers rode, required water. In eastern lands caravans pitch their tents when they come to a spring of water, and a small fountain occasions the encampment of an army, or the erection of a town. Thus all Israel encamped at Elim, because there were wells of water there. Ex. xv. 27. For the same reason the American Methodists hold their large and protracted 'Camp-meetings' where a copious supply of water can be had. Though in our rainy and well watered island, we search for 'dry places,' and jealously guard ourselves against the influences of a proverbially moist atmosphere, we build our villages and towns near to streams and fountains of water. Even if John had immersed, since his congregations were formed of people from all parts of the land, they must have required more water for their own personal use, than he could have required for immersion; and a good spring may supply water enough for the consumption of large numbers of persons, which is not deep enough to dip an adult in, and much less for one man to stand in and to plunge numbers of other men. The summers of Palestine are eminently dry, so that the brooks are usually dried up, and sometimes water is sold by measure at a high price. Had John selected a place where water was scarce, and continued there in the summer months, the dreadful sufferings from thirst would soon have scattered his congregations abroad. In reply to statements like these, it has been asked, what greater difficulty could the crowds around John have found, than the multitudes that followed our Lord for three days, and who, having nothing to eat, were ready to faint by the way, so that he wrought a miracle to give them food? Matt. xv. 32. & Mark VIII. 2. Now this very fact is a confirmation of our argument. The Scripture does not say that they had nothing to drink. Hunger might have been endured for three days, but could thirst? Where

were these multitudes when they so devotedly followed Christ? They were on the banks of the lake Genesareth, the water of which is good for drink, and doubtless they drank of it abundantly. The Saviour ministered to multitudes where there was 'much water,' but he is not said to have dipped them therein.

To all this it may be replied, that John is not said to have *preached* at Enon, but to have *baptized*, 'because there was much water there.' But in all probability, baptized has a corresponding meaning to that which, it has been shown, belongs to his official designation 'the Baptist,' and to that of his ministry 'the baptism of John; and therefore it does not refer specifically to a mere rite. As he baptized wherever he preached, and baptism was one object of his ministry, to say that he baptized at Enon is, in one word, to say that he exercised his ministry there. The great object of his labours was the baptism of the mind and life, by repentance and purification from sin, and as a preparation for the kingdom of Christ; the more subsidiary object was the baptism of the body, as a symbol of the holier spiritual baptism. The people went to hear his preaching, as well as to submit to his religious rite. His whole work was designated from a particular part of it, as Christian denominations, in our time, are called by names which refer not to the things that are common to them all, but to things peculiar to and distinctive of each, and by which each is distinguished; as Independent, Episcopalian, Baptist, &c. &c. When it is said that John baptized at Enon, it means that he officiated in all departments of his ministry; so that it does not follow that much water was necessary for that particular part of his work, on which his general designation, 'the Baptist,' was founded.

Enon was a small place, about five miles from the Jordan. Its waters were anciently of little note. This is the only instance in which they are mentioned. Even Josephus, who speaks of many other waters,

never mentions those of Enon. Jacob's well is still deep. Siloam is still a pool, and various natural fountains in Palestine still flow. At Enon there is a fountain or well, as in the days of John. These waters have flowed for ages, and being natural springs may flow until the end of time. The well of Enon is in a kind of cave.* That this well was there anciently, and consequently that it supplied John and his congregations with water, is clear from the fact, that the ancient name, *Æn-on*, signifies the fountain of On. The first syllable is derived from the Hebrew *ein*, which means a place or opening where water springs are, as in GEN. VIII. 2. LEV. XI. 36. and II. KINGS, III. 19; and it also denotes a spring of water, as in Ps. CIV. 10. Thus this name, like many other Scripture names, describes the place to which it is given, and it agrees with the fact that there is still a spring there; so that it is not difficult to judge how 'much water' was had at Enon. This fountain, like all others, was undoubtedly of great value in a country where, during half the year, the weather is sultry and water scarce. That John dipped the people in this fountain is extremely improbable, as, apart from all considerations as to its diameter and depth, it is obvious that it could not have been used for dipping and drinking, since the use of it for the former purpose, must have rendered it unfit for the latter. But the people of necessity drank its water, and consequently they could not have been dipped into it.

* Mr. Robinson, an immersionist,—quoted by Mr. Maccalla in his debate with Mr. Campbell, has given the following description of Enon. 'Enon near to Salim was either a natural spring, an artificial reservoir, or a cavernous temple of the Sun, prepared by the Canaanites, the ancient idolatrous inhabitants of the land. The eastern versions, that is, the Syriac, Ethiopic, Persian, and Arabic of the gospel of John, as well as the Hebrew and Chaldean *Ain - yon*, or *Gnain - yon*, suggest these opinions. It is difficult to say which is the precise meaning of the Evangelist's word Enon; and it is not certain whether the plain meaning be that John was baptizing at the *Dove-spring* near to Salim, or at the *Sun-fountain* near to Salim.'

The word (*polla*) rendered much, literally means many, and forms the first syllable of some of our words, as polytheism, &c. Accordingly, the marginal reading of 'much water' is 'many waters'. It may refer to the numerous little streams or rills, formed of water which ran over the brink of the spring, and which the earth failed to absorb. In the language of an oriental imagination, these would be *hudata polla*, or waters many; an expression which sometimes refers to scarce and precious little streams and springs, and which is used as a hyperbole, like the words so often used by Moses, 'A land flowing with milk and honey.' There certainly are places in the Jordan where immersion might be practised at some periods of the year, but in general the river is too deep; it is also difficult in the descent, and dangerously rapid. Dr. Shaw states that at the place where he crossed the Jordan, it was three yards deep, even at the brink. Where Viscount Chateaubriand went over, it was six or seven feet deep, close to the shore. Mr. Thompson says it is exceeding deep, even at the edge of the inner bank. Volney says that the river is ten or twelve feet in depth. Mr. Monro, in his Summer Ramble in Syria, speaking of the place which tradition assigns to the passage of the Israelites, and the baptism of our Lord, says, 'The stream was running with the precipitous fury of a rapid, and the bank was steep, shelving off abruptly to deep water;' and Mr. Maundrel says of the same place, that it was deeper than his height. Dr. Kitto, after collating the statements of various travellers, respecting different parts of the river, states the average depth to be eight or nine feet. The extreme rapidity of the current makes it deep, and renders it dangerous for bathing. Scenes of indecorum and death often occur when deluded pilgrims, wrapped in winding sheets, plunge in the water to wash away their sins. Though to save their lives they cling to the bushes and trees which overhang the stream, they are not

unfrequently swept away by the rapid current, and drowned. It is extremely improbable,—in the absence of all evidence to the contrary, that the great harbinger of our Lord stood in the deep and rapid stream, plunging crowds of people indiscriminately. The liability to accidents and death, even where immersion was practicable, renders such a course highly improbable, to say the least. Immersionists in general wisely abstain from dipping in rivers, and especially such as are deep and rapid; but rare as immersions in rivers are, there have of late years been several instances of drowning in the attempts made to practise them. If John had immersed large numbers in the Jordan, there would have been many instances of drowning, and yet we never read of one. Modern 'baptistries,' with their convenient steps, taps, drains, vestries, and prepared dresses, and in which the water is quite still, and of a determined and uniform depth, are very different places to Jordan. If John had wanted a suitable place for the immersion of large bodies of people, he would probably have gone, not to the spring Enon, nor to the dangerous river, but to the lake of Genesareth; where he would have found still and translucent waters, a pebbly bottom, and withal a safe and gentle descent.

But what an employment would this constant plunging in water have been, for the long predicted and honoured herald of the Saviour! Had he found places in Jordan that were conveniently shallow, of an even bottom and a gentle descent, to have immersed the very large numbers whom he baptized, he must have spent a large portion of his time in water. Instead of being principally employed in giving religious instruction, he must have been standing up to the middle in the river,—how he could have stood in the fountain of Enon it is difficult to say,—splashing water about incessantly, by plunging all classes of people over head and lifting them up again. Such a life might suit a fabulous merman,

but it could not be borne by a man. Such wet and exhausting labour, for a lengthy period of time, it was physically impossible for John to perform. Even had it been suited to the human constitution, it would have been but ill adapted to the high and spiritual purpose of preparing the way for the Son of God to appear and establish his kingdom on the earth, and to turn the hearts of many to the Lord their God.

There is another consideration which it is painful to have to adduce, but the interests and obligations of truth forbid its being suppressed. The public indecency of immersion, is a strong reason to prove that it was not practised. The law of God distinctly prohibits any unseemly exposure of the body. The altar was directed to be on level ground, lest the priests should expose their limbs while ascending the steps. Exod. xx. 26. Nothing like public immersion by an administrator was ever known in the rites of the law, or in the usages of the Jews. To eastern nations, who are eminently modest, and whose women are generally veiled, not to adorn but to conceal their faces, nothing could have been more offensive than for men, and especially for young and aged women, diffident sisters and daughters, mothers and wives, who were so reserved that they avoided the touch and even the look of a strange man, to be publicly exposed, and plunged over head in water, by a man, in the open air, and in the presence of great crowds of people. Such a practice would have been justly regarded as nothing less than an open violation of all propriety; and in the absence of all proof it must be regarded by all unprejudiced men as utterly incredible.

Those brethren who affirm that the Jews were plunged, should at least show how the alledged act was practicable. The baptized must of course have had clothes on, but the poor who had travelled from distant places on foot, could not have had a change

of clothes with them; indeed but few of them could have had any other clothes than those which they wore on their journey. If then they were put under water with their usual dresses on, they must have gone home, however distant, with the drenched garments about them, at the hazard of life, and to the amusement of some spectators, and the shame of others. This being incredible, the only other hypothesis is, that they changed their clothes; but to those who had not a change, and they must have been many, this was impracticable; and if any were baptized without being immersed, they all were; for John would baptize them all in the same manner. The baptism of John being a new and temporary institution, it is highly improbable that an immense stock of dresses, weighted at the bottom to make them sink, could have been manufactured for the use of the multitudes. If he immersed, there must have been tents erected, sufficiently numerous to afford a becoming privacy to each person; or the promiscuous crowds of both sexes must have twice changed their clothes, and exposed their persons publicly in the open air. In either case men and women must have been seen emerging from the water gasping for breath, and uttering cries of fear and suffering, climbing up the steep ascent in a pitiable plight, with disordered and streaming dresses, and dishevelled hair. If these be strange words to your ears, there must have been stranger sights to your eyes, had you been there. Could such scenes as these have taken place as solemn religious services for penitent sinners? While they were being baptized they confessed their sins, Matt. III. 6. but how could they have been making confessions while being submerged in water? Whatever degree of incredibility belongs to all such hypotheses belongs equally to immersion.

If this formidable ceremony had been attempted, instead of multitudes eagerly pressing forward to be plunged, the common feelings of mankind would at

once have condemned it; for such a thing as one man dipping others, for religious purposes, was improper and unprecedented. If they had not condemned it, there must in many instances have been reluctance to overcome, objections to answer, questions to solve, difficulties and dangers to avoid, many important conveniences to provide which may be rather referred to than described, exhortations, cautions, and guards would have been required, and reproach and scorn would have been encountered. And yet not the most distant allusion is made to such things, and for the very obvious reason that there was no such practice as immersion to give rise to them. As the ancient and divinely appointed rite was administered, there was no call for explanation or comment. If a new rite, such as immersion, had been observed, it would have been described; but as a rite of fifteen centuries was adopted, it is spoken of as one which was so universally known as to require no description, or formal preparation, or delay, and which was everywhere practicable, safe, convenient, and delicate.

Moreover the immersion of such immense numbers, as John baptized, was naturally impossible; and consequently they were not immersed. If he had dipped as many persons in a day as a modern immersionist, with every imaginable convenience, can in a fortnight, and thus in half a year have done the weary work of seven years, he could not have dipped such numbers as went to him for baptism; for 'Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, were all baptized of him in—or at the brink of the water of—Jordan.' Matt. III. 5. These baptisms are all described as having been administered by him only, and during the six months of his ministry which preceded the baptism of Christ, and notwithstanding that much of his time was devoted to preaching, &c. The population of Judea amounted to at least two millions. Josephus states that

at the passover held thirty-five years afterwards, there were present, in Jerusalem alone, as many as three millions. Wars of the Jews B. II. ch. XIV. s. 3. This agrees with what he states of a later passover, and of other events. It is not necessary to suppose that every person in Judea was baptized, but the numbers must have been large, for stronger language could hardly be used had the whole nation been baptized. But few would submit to this ordinance at first, but had he laboured, standing in deep water, for eight hours a day, sabbaths included, and immersed forty in an hour, being three hundred and twenty each day, only fifty-eight thousand two hundred and forty could have passed through his hands in the half year. It was impossible for him thus to stand in deep water eight hours a day for six months, but had it been possible, he could not have immersed one in fifty of three millions; and yet it is said that 'Jerusalem, and ALL Judea, and ALL the region round about Jordan, were ALL baptized of him—not of his disciples—in Jordan.' Now that which could not be, was not. As the immersion of such numbers as were baptized was impracticable, they could not have been immersed. The insuperable difficulties of the immersion theory are adduced, not to oppose the word of God, but to interpret its true meaning, and to show that when John baptized he did not dip.

The most scriptural hypothesis is, that the people were arranged, as when our Lord miraculously fed thousands at the lake of Genesareth, in an orderly manner, and that the illustrious prophet, as the penitents prayed and confessed their sins, passed along the lines of the people, accompanied with a suitable font or laver, and with hyssop, according to the law, baptized them by sprinkling water upon them. No valid reason has been assigned to show that he did not apply this divine rite to a new purpose, at a time when the law which enjoined it was unrepealed. It was the only specific mode of purification which an

administrator was commanded to observe on the persons of men, and which symbolized the shedding forth of the Holy Spirit; and it was convenient, delicate, solemn, suitable to a religious service, instituted by God, and free from every difficulty and objection; whereas the immersion of people by an administrator was never appointed by God, nor is it credible that it was practised by his inspired servants.

The argument which is illogically adduced to sustain the opinion that John immersed, is fatal to the opinion that the apostles immersed. If the inference, that John immersed because he sometimes baptized where there was water enough for that purpose, be correct, then it must be equally correct to infer, even on the immersionist's own showing, that the apostles did not immerse, seeing that they baptized where there was but little water, and indeed wherever new converts were found. This is an inconclusive argument in favour of immersion, but a conclusive argument against it; because it is at least possible that John might have baptized at the Jordan, or even at the Mediterranean sea, and yet not have dipped the people therein; but as Christian ministers baptized wherever they happened to be, in deserts, dungeons, private houses, and other dry places, where there was but little water, immersion by them was impracticable. The more our esteemed brethren, who deem it a Christian duty to dip, attempt to prove that John must have immersed, because he baptized where there was sufficient water, the more do they prove that the apostles must not have immersed, because they baptized in all places; and water could not be obtained in all places, sufficiently deep, and otherwise convenient for plunging new converts. We have disproved the validity of this argument in relation to John's baptism, but in using it, immersionists overturn their own rite as a Christian ordinance, in the very attempt to establish it as such. Either the apostles did not baptize like John, or if

they did, it was not to immerse that John went to Enon and Jordan; in either case the immersion theory falls to the ground.

The simple fact appears to be, that John preached and baptized where there was a good supply of water, because he, being only ONE, and not being an itinerant, crowds of people congregated around him wherever he exercised his ministry; for the intense expectation of the public mind was directed to him, as being the Messiah, or his distinguished harbinger. But the ministers of Christ were many and scattered abroad. They preached and baptized in all places, frequently at the homes of men, so that it was not necessary for them, as it was for him, to fix their preaching stations near to streams and fountains of water.

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD JESUS.

When our Lord presented himself to John for baptism, the Baptist hesitated to administer the rite to so august a person. But as he had humbled himself, he paid obedience to every law. He observed all the rites of the law, until with his last breath, it was 'finished.' And for the same reason, as the baptism of John was from heaven, he deemed it proper to submit to it. It was a divine institution, and as it became him to do all that was right, he said 'Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.' Matt. III. 15. Thus, though he was not a penitent, he gave the sanction of his example to the baptism of John as an ordinance of God.

There is nothing in the narrative of his baptism to sanction the immersion hypothesis. Neither John nor the Saviour is represented as ever being in, and much less under water. In the English version, Matthew and Mark are made to say that our Lord, after his baptism, came UP OUT OF the water; but they do not say that he came up from UNDER the water. He might have been in, and have come out of the water, without being under it. But he was not in the water,

nor does the Greek word *apo* imply that he come out of it. *Apo* means from. FROM is its primary, proper, and usual sense. It should never be rendered 'out of,' unless the sense of the context requires it, as when it is clear from the narrative that the person came from within the place from which he departed. Even then it retains its proper sense, and means FROM out of. It does not denote the act of proceeding 'out of' the interior of a place, but the motion FROM one place to another. Accordingly it is rendered 'from,' nearly four hundred times in the English New Testament. How absurdly it would read, were it always rendered 'out of,' the following instances will shew. 'Who hath warned you to flee OUT OF the wrath to come?' Mat. III. 7. 'Depart OUT OF me ye workers of iniquity.' Mat. VII. 23. 'Let him now come down OUT OF the cross.' Mat. XXVII. 42. 'Shake off the dust OUT OF your feet.' Luke IX. 5, 'The angel departed OUT OF him.' Acts XII. 10. Dr. Ryland, in his appendix, p. 28, admits that it might be generally if not always rendered from, as in the above instances; and Dr. Carson says, in p. 126, 'I admit the proper translation of *apo* is from.—I perfectly agree that *apo* would have had its full meaning, if they had only gone down to the EDGE of the water.' Speaking of an opponent, who states that *apo* rarely has the sense of 'out of,' he says, in p. 337, 'He grants me more than I will accept, I deny that it ever signifies out of.' *Apo* is a word of very indeterminate meaning. No well informed and candid person will ever suppose that our Lord was plunged in water, because *apo* is in the narrative; and there is nothing else to prove it. The English words, 'out of,' prove nothing, unless it be that our admirable version is, in this instance, incorrect. The proper reading is, that when the Lord Jesus was baptized 'He went up straightway from the water,' that is from the brink of the water.

Not only is there no valid reason to believe that he was dipped, but there are valid reasons to believe

that he was not. Before immersionists can expect us to believe that he was actually immersed, we have a right to require that they should at least show how it could have been done, with a delicacy, dignity, and propriety, that became his divine character, and the sacredness of the occasion. Did he lay aside his garments before all the spectators, and then go plunging into the deep and rapid river; or did he change his garments, and thus unbare his sacred person twice? But from whence could he obtain a change of clothes? As he forbade his disciples to take more than one coat on their journeys, it is probable that he had but one coat himself. Did he then submit to be put under water with his usual clothes on, and afterwards permit them to remain drenched upon his person until they were dry? If every such hypothesis is marked with impropriety and indecorum, how can we, in the absence of all evidence, be called upon to believe that John took hold of the incarnate Son of God and plunged him in a river?

When Jesus was baptized he was praying. Luke III. 21. Praying and dipping are incongruous acts. With bended knee in intercessory prayer, he appeared within the banks and near to the water of Jordan. John shed forth a small quantity of water upon his sacred head as a baptism; and as he did so, the heavens were opened, the Holy Spirit descended in a visible emblem of purity and gentleness, and the voice of God proclaimed, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' This was not a curious but a solemn scene; and the rite thus administered corresponded with the usages of the Jews, and with the institution of God, and it was an unobjectionable and highly becoming mode of baptism.

THE DISCIPLES' FEET WASHED EMBLEMATICALLY.

As our Lord would not invest sacred rites with undue importance, he himself did not administer baptism; but he ennobled service, and by his own example

invested acts of humility and love with dignity and honour. When he deigned to perform the office of washing his servants' feet, it was not merely as an example of humility that he did so, but also as an emblem of purification from sin. The disciples were not seated at the table with their feet on the floor, but were reclining on a couch at the table, after the manner of the Jews,—for we find them eating after their feet were washed,—so that their feet were extended from the table and above the floor. There is no reason to suppose, therefore, that their feet were successively immersed in the water which Jesus first poured in the basin. Had they been so, Peter would not have been so wishful to be washed all over in the water. The basin being set on the floor under their feet, the Saviour might have washed them by a small affusion, pouring the water with his hands, as his own feet were washed with the tears of Mary. He did not submerge the body of each disciple, as an emblem of being made spiritually pure, but affirmed that washing the feet only was sufficient to indicate complete cleansing, and said that—Judas excepted—they were then 'clean every whit.' His own example and his own words, therefore, forbid us to believe that he afterwards instituted a law that every disciple should be bodily submerged in water, as an emblem of being cleansed from sin. His disciples, when they baptized, affused the faces of men, and he, as an indication and example of humility, appears to have affused their feet.

As baptizo, when occasionally used by Greek writers, denoted the condition of being completely immersed, by whatever means, the transition in a foreign country, and that country Judea, to the condition of being completely CLEANSED, or 'clean every whit,' in whatever way the emblematical rite might be performed, was both easy and natural.

THE BAPTISMS ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

After the ascension of our Lord, the apostles, according to his command, departed not from Jerusalem, but

waited for the promise of the Father, until they were 'endued with power from on high.' On the day of Pentecost 'They were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it—the sound—filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, LIKE as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, &c.' Acts II. 1-4. This descent and influence of the Spirit was the baptism which John predicted, as the spiritual counterpart of his own water baptism, and which the Lord Jesus promised. It is an incontestible fact that in this baptism there was nothing like dipping. When the people of various nations were amazed at hearing unlearned men speak in all languages, 'as the Spirit gave them utterance,' Peter declared that this descent of the Spirit was the fulfilment of the promise made 720 B. C. by the prophet Joel; 'I will POUR out my Spirit upon all flesh,—and on my servants, and on my handmaidens, I will POUR out in those days of my Spirit.' Acts II. 17 & 18. quoted from Joel II. 28 & 29. And Peter also said that 'Jesus—being by the right hand of God exalted,—hath SHED FORTH this which—(that is the effects of which)—ye now see and hear.' Acts II. 32 & 33. This baptism is figuratively described not as an immersion but as an effusion. Both prophecy and history affirm that the Spirit came down from on high, and was poured and shed forth. This affusion is of course a metaphor, but the descent of the element upon the objects is a very different metaphor to that of dipping the objects into the element. The sound was like that of a rushing mighty wind, and was so loud that it was heard all through the house. The appearance as of fire did not surround them, as water surrounds an immersed object, and still less were they dipped in fire, but it sat upon their heads like cloven tongues or flames. The Holy Spirit filled the apostles with his influences to an extraordinary de-

gree. The modal description of the Spirit's baptism, and not whether there was much or little of the Spirit, is the question at issue. Shedding forth is the mode ascribed to this communication of the gift of the Spirit, and this shedding forth of the Spirit is denominated a baptism by John, by the inspired apostles, and by the Lord Jesus. Who then can deny what God distinctly and repeatedly affirms? As God baptized when he shed forth his Spirit, his ministers also baptize when they shed forth water.

It is sometimes affirmed that on this memorable day the apostles were immersed in that which filled the house where they sat, and that 'it' surrounded them as an immersed object is surrounded with fluid. What then was that which filled the house? It was not the influence of the Holy Ghost, for though the minds of the apostles were filled with that influence, of course the house was not. Nor was it wind, for though Dr. Carson says, p. 107, that 'They were literally covered with an appearance of wind and of fire,' (AN APPEARANCE OF WIND must be a new discovery,) there was no wind whatever in the house, though the sound resembled that of a strong wind. They were baptized as with fire, but fire did not fill the house; only cloven tongues as of fire,—like lambent flames, sat upon each of them. The antecedent of the pronoun 'it,' is *echos*, a sound, a noise, a reverberation. It was the sound and the sound only that filled the house. Surely it will not be affirmed that they were immersed in a sound. Even this sound came down upon them from heaven. If they were not immersed in an *echos*, there was no immersion whatever, either spiritual or literal, but there was a baptism; so that to be baptized is not to be immersed.

In the after part of the day of Pentecost three thousand new converts were baptized. The entire argument in favour of the rite of sprinkling, as the true mode of baptism, shows that they must have been baptized by sprinkling. In the narrative itself

there is nothing whatever to indicate that they were dipped; but the immersion hypothesis involves a series of improbabilities, which amount almost to a moral demonstration of its untruth.

It is improbable that there were the requisite conveniences in Jerusalem for the immersion of three thousand men and women in one afternoon, without preparation and without delay. Jordan is more than thirty miles distant in a straight line. Kedron is not a perennial stream. It is but a little brook, and is easily crossed without a bridge. In the rainy season it is a rapid, but Mr. Buckingham says, an insignificant and muddy torrent, which carries away the filth of the city. In the summer it is dry. As Pentecost is in summer, and was that year on the 24th of May; when the rainy season was over, it must have been dry then. Siloam and Bethesda are very little pools, fed by a solitary spring; the only spring in the environs of Jerusalem, says Lamartine, 'in which to dip the finger or moisten the lips.' Siloam is accessible by a descent of twenty steps. Josephus states that these pools, and the little springs in the neighbourhood, were subject to being dried up. The immersion of three thousand in these pools, during one afternoon, was impracticable. Dr. Kitto states that few and scarcely any metropolitan towns, have such an inadequate natural supply of water as Jerusalem, and hence the elaborate contrivances adopted to collect and preserve the precious fluid, and bring it to town. To this day, small as the city is, water has to be brought from Bethlehem on mules. Water was principally collected from rain in ancient times, Amos iv. 7 & 8. as it now is; and many houses had cisterns in which to store it during the summer. Most of the citizens hated Christ and his followers, but if they had loved them, it is not very likely that they would have allowed their cisterns to be turned into baptistries; thus to spoil the water for future use, with the long drought of an oriental summer in prospect; du-

ring which not a drop of rain sometimes falls for months. But had they been willing to have their water spoiled, cisterns were very unlikely places for three thousand, of both sexes, and of various ages and sizes, to get into and out of again. Possibly there were some public reservoirs near the city, and there were the pools of Solomon at Ethan near Bethlehem, a distance of six miles, in which water, carefully collected, was preserved for public use. But, to say nothing as to their depth, the public authorities could not have allowed the use of public reservoirs to dip three thousand people in, thus to make the water unfit to drink, and especially for despised Christians to be dipped therein. If John who was so popular could not baptize at Jerusalem, but must go to Jordan for that purpose, as some immersionists suppose, how could three thousand Christians have been immersed there in one afternoon without any previous arrangement, and with the facility and ease which such a brief narrative as that of Scripture seems to imply.

If every convenience had been specially prepared for immersion upon a large scale, it is not very credible that twelve men, had they all been at work, and had they done nothing else, could at one time have dipped three thousand persons, which would have been two hundred and fifty each; for there was nothing miraculous about the baptism, nor does it appear that they had any assistants, or that others had authority to baptize. If there were more baptizers than the twelve, there must have been as many more baptistries; so that if such a hypothesis diminishes one difficulty it increases another.

Many of the persons who were baptized appear to have been devout foreigners from 'every nation under heaven.' That natives and strangers of both sexes, in various states of health, and of diverse costumes and habits, were immersed with their usual dresses on, and that they afterwards walked through the streets arrayed in drenched garments, exposed

to the taunts of scoffers, and the mirth of the light-hearted, and at the peril of their lives is extremely improbable, and especially so in the absence of all evidence. The motley multitudes were hastily drawn together from all parts of the city by curiosity, to hear unlearned men speak miraculously in a great variety of languages. They consequently never dreamt upon leaving home that they should be baptized as Christians before they returned, and cannot be supposed to have taken a change of clothes with them. But if they had, it is difficult to conceive how and where they could have twice disrobed themselves; and how, if there had been every convenience, so vast and mixed a multitude could have been submerged devoutly or even decently, to say nothing of the time which, according to modern practice, must have been occupied in examining all the new converts individually. The narrative speaks of baptism as a rite which was administered then and there, without hesitation or inconvenience, and which required no preparation and but little time.

The jealous orientals, who frequently repudiated their wives for trifling causes, and who fostered and guarded the modesty of female relatives with scrupulous care, would never have allowed them to submit to the unseemly act of being taken hold of by a strange man, and dipped in water. They would have deemed it a trespass upon the common feelings of human nature, and especially upon religion, for men to bathe women, either in the presence of a large audience, or in a private bath; and the immersion of such numbers could not have taken place without many accidental exposures and dangers, and without exciting ridicule and jealousy, if not disgust. Before we can be called upon to believe that God appointed such a practice as a Christian duty, our brethren who advocate it must produce its parallel in some other institution or law which Christ has enjoined.

How could twelve poor men, of a despised and

persecuted sect, immerse three thousand persons in London, where there are vast means of supplying water to every house, without the slightest expectation of such an event, and without the least delay; and especially if the Thames were as distant from London as Jordan is from Jerusalem, and if water were scarce, and the drought of an eastern summer were in prospect, so that the precious fluid would be carefully preserved? Luke says nothing about the water, nor is it likely that he should, when a very small quantity was required; but had they been immersed, the water, and the sundry conveniences of a modern baptistry, would have been very important; and in that case we should probably have heard something about them. But the baptism is mentioned in the briefest and simplest manner, as though it had been a brief and simple rite, and administered at once, and on the spot, without ostentation, difficulty, or delay. No explanation seems to have been given, or to have been necessary, as though it were understood to be the ancient and usual rite observed when a subject received lustral water from an administrator.

As millions were discipled to Christ in a comparatively short period proximately, what hazardous and unseemly toil must have devolved upon the ministers, if these converts and their households were all dipped! What unbecoming scenes must have occurred, and what strange emotions must this novel and notable rite have excited among polished Greeks and Romans! And yet no difficulties or objections appear to have arisen, nor any formal preliminaries to have been required. Baptism appears to have been practicable and easy, without inconvenience and without delay, at all periods and in every place. Where mountain streams and intermitting springs were dry, where the cup of cold water was an act of charity, and in thirsty lands and parching summers, baptism was administered though immersion was impracticable. For immediate baptism water was found every

where, but for immediate immersion, when the gospel was first introduced, water could rarely be found anywhere. Had the Lord Jesus intended to embarrass his people in their attempts to observe the law of baptism, and to make it a burdensome service, like some of the rites of the law, which Peter said they and their fathers could not bear; had he intended it to be often impracticable, and to be an inconvenient, unseemly, painful, and dangerous rite, dipping is the very form he would have enjoined. But had the itinerant apostles been commanded to immerse all nations, would they have been forbidden to take more than one coat on their journeys, and would not an exception have been made in favour of a baptizing suit? Unless they had had two suits at least, to have perambulated the nations of the earth, preaching and plunging continually, would have subjected both them and their successors to serious inconvenience and danger.

As Christianity spread rapidly among the nations of the earth, and as, though vehemently opposed by the confederated powers of evil, it won millions of human hearts to the Saviour in a comparatively short time, innumerable baptisms took place; and yet no formal preparation, difficulties, or delay, appear to have arisen from the size, sex, age, numbers, sickness, delicacy, or diffidence of the baptized; or from the want of changes of raiment, dressing rooms, or water. Wherever the apostles preached, and persons avowed their faith in Christ, though it were cold or hot, day or night, though the new converts were male or female, old or young, sick or well, they were all baptized at once, without any probation, and without the least delay; so that baptism is a rite which can be administered without any arrangements or notice, beyond what are momentary, and with so small a quantity of water as may be obtained wherever men can dwell. We never read of garments being laid aside,—as when Jesus washed his disciples' feet

and Stephen was stoned; of water of proper depth being sought for; or of any of those conveniences or restoratives being used, which, if absent from modern immersions, would be important desiderata. All the narratives of baptism agree with the rite of applying water to the body, and not one suggests the idea of immersion; but some of them are connected with circumstances which shew the immersion hypothesis to be in the highest degree improbable.

THE BAPTISM OF PAUL.

The narrative of this event shows that Christian baptism is so simple and easy a rite, that it may be administered to a person whose spirit and bodily strength are in a state of prostration; and who is ill from three days entire abstinence from food and drink, from the pride of his heart being withered and his fondest hopes being wrecked, and from his having been miraculously struck with sudden and total blindness, and been overwhelmed with anguish and terror. To have plunged a man overhead in cold water who was in such a state of exhaustion, and not to have delayed his immersion until he had taken food, and recovered from the effects of his distressing excitement, would have savoured of unfeeling severity, rather than of the mild and merciful spirit of Christ, who said, 'My yoke is easy and my burden is light.' Matt. xi. 30. It seems incredible, therefore, that Paul was immersed when he was baptized. Moreover it is not intimated that Ananias and Paul repaired to a bath, or went in search of deep water, or that they left the room in which they met. He was not laid down in a 'liquid grave,' but, being at prayer, he arose, or rising (*anastas*) was baptized. His rising and his baptism are mentioned as though they were almost simultaneous acts, or followed each other so quickly that it might be said, that 'rising he was baptized.' Both the facts and the language employed, are unfavourable to the hypothesis that he was submerged.

THE BAPTISM OF LYDIA.

As Lydia dealt in a costly article, and could invite three Christian ministers to her house, and entertain them for some time, without previous preparation, it is evident that she was in good circumstances; and as, though a gentile, she worshipped God, she was religiously educated. She, with her household, and a band of women, met for worship by the side of the Strymon at Philippi, in Macedonia. There they were met by Paul, Silas, and Luke; and as Paul preached, the Lord opened her heart, and she and her household were all baptized before returning home, as the history plainly implies; so that they were baptized at the river. Baptism therefore is an ordinance which a holy man may administer to a praying woman, unexpectedly, and away from home, in the open air, without either of them having a change of raiment, and while other men and women were witnesses of all that took place; so that baptism could not have been immersion. Is it credible that a female of her station and piety, who, as she went to the river side with no idea of being put under water, had no change of clothes for herself or her children, should have been immersed by a man? As a Grecian lady she was probably veiled, and Paul, in 1. Cor. xi. 1-16. declared it to be a shame for a woman to pray in the presence of men with her head uncovered, that is unveiled, and strictly forbade it, as being, in that country, an act of indecorum. How then, in the absence of all testimony, can it be deemed probable, and much less certain, that he required Lydia to be bodily immersed in the river; and that she, under such circumstances, permitted a strange man to plunge her and her household under water? Let all such persons believe this as are able, but certainly we are not.

THE BAPTISM OF THE PHILIPPIAN JAILER.

The Jailer and 'and all his' were baptized, Acts

xvi. 33, but there is nothing whatever in the history to sanction the opinion that they were dipped; nor is it likely that ancient prisons were constructed with such regard to the health or comfort of prisoners, as to contain baths sufficiently large for one person to plunge others therein. Drs. Jenkins and Carson have suggested that they were immersed in the river Strymon, but such an opinion is unsupported by a tittle of evidence, and is clearly opposed to the sense of the narrative. That all the members of a family, aroused from midnight repose by a terrific earthquake, and agitated with violent emotions, were at the same hour successively plunged into cold water, and that the parents and children with the immerser, then rushed from the tank or pool in a pitiable plight to the house, and immediately ate and rejoiced together, is a hypothesis that appears to have come from the regions of romance, and not to have been deduced from the brief and simple narrative of Scripture. That the Jailer and all his, were plunged in the river, is still more incredible. Midnight was not the hour for a family to be immersed in a river with safety; nor would the terrors of an earthquake facilitate so formidable a rite. The Jailer had been strictly charged to secure his prisoners, and was about to commit suicide from the fear that they would escape. It was at his peril that he should have passed through the streets, when people were abroad, with his prisoners at large, in violation of his public duty. Indeed they appear not to have left the place at all, for they refused to leave the jail until they were honourably released. As both Paul and Silas had been cruelly flogged, and their flesh was lacerated with 'many stripes,' were they in a fit state to go into a river, and to stand in deep water until they, or one of them had dipped the Jailer and all his? And then there was the darkness, the dressing and undressing, the dangers of stumbling, drowning, &c. and other circumstances attendant upon perilous midnight immer-

sions in a river, which prove the supposition to be incredible. The only pretension to an argument in favour of their immersion, is the groundless syllogism, in which immersionists seek for refuge, whenever pressed with objections which they cannot answer, *viz.* that baptizo means to immerse, that the Jailer and all his were baptized, and that therefore they were immersed. But as the circumstances connected with the ritual use of that word in the New Testament, clearly prove that it does not mean to immerse, that syllogism is based on unsound premises, and is consequently untrue.

The baptism is described as a simple and easy rite, free from difficulty and danger. The Jailer and his family having been aroused from midnight slumbers by an earthquake, were reassured by the imprisoned saints; who also made known to them the great salvation, and won their confidence, affection, and gratitude. With all tenderness and promptitude the Jailer washed their wounds; and in immediate connection with that ablution, he, and all his, received Christian baptism from them. In washing their stripes he must necessarily have used a basin, or some such vessel, and as the baptisms are mentioned as having taken place in connection with that act of kindness, a little pure water poured into the basin, sufficed for the administration of that simple and beautiful ordinance; and thus, though it was midnight, and great commotion and terror reigned around them, they all were 'baptized straightway,' that is readily, conveniently, and at once, and both the baptizers and the baptized rejoiced together.

THE BAPTISM OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH.

This case is often quoted as being in favour of immersion, but the only reason peculiar to it is the use of the indeterminate prepositions *eis* and *ek*; which in our version are rendered 'into' and 'out of.' Whatever baptism may be, it is not going down

into water, nor coming up out of it. Those words describe what took place before baptism and after it, but it cannot be inferred from them what the true mode of baptism is. The immersionist has his own sense of the verb previously fixed in his mind, and by his sense of baptizo he interprets *eis* and *ek*, as being in agreement with it. Having shown the New Testament sense of the verb, let us examine the meaning of the prepositions, apart from that of the verb; and, by a consideration of all the circumstances, endeavour to ascertain in what way the baptism was administered.

To some readers going 'down into the water' suggests the idea of immersion. But to be immersed, a man must not only go down into, but down UNDER water. To prove from the preposition *eis*, that the eunuch was put under water, it must be proved that *eis* signifies under absolutely, for if it ever means anything else, it may mean something else here; and therefore it must at least be uncertain,—in the absence of other and definite evidence, whether he was put under water, or something else was done which *eis* may mean. If it is never used in the sense of under, it cannot be used in that sense here; but if it were ever used in such a sense, no valid reason can be adduced why it should denote under in this narrative.

Immersionists affirm that *eis* means 'into,' and they ask what he went 'into' the water for but to be put under it. Admitting that he went into the water, who can prove that he went ankle deep? An ox or an ass may go down into a stream without going overhead, and a man may surely do the same thing. His going into the water is no evidence that he was dipped. Whatever such hallucination may float in the mind of an immersionist, it will not sink the eunuch. He might have gone into the water, though it barely covered his sandals.

'They went down BOTH of them into the water, BOTH Philip and the Eunuch.' Acts VIII. 38. Thus

what is said of one is said also of the other. If *eis* puts the eunuch under water, it must put Philip there also. So that if the argument from *eis* proves anything, it proves too much; and it is a sound maxim in logic, that that which proves too much proves nothing. If in addition to *eis* it be attempted to prove an immersion from any other word in the narrative, that is practically to relinquish the argument drawn from *eis*, as being *per se* insufficient.

To make it certain that either Philip or the eunuch went into the water, even to the depth of an inch, it must be proved that the specific sense of *eis* is always and nothing but into; because if it ever means any thing else, it may mean something else here;—there being nothing stated in the narrative to show that they were in the water;—so that it must at least be uncertain whether they went into the water or not; and consequently, the inference that the eunuch was immersed therein, can amount to nothing more than a conjecture, and a conjecture cannot be the foundation of a doctrine or a duty. Now *eis* has many other meanings beside into, as it is used in the New Testament, and in the classics. It means to; towards; near to; by; on; in; at; among; for; &c., &c. Accordingly it is rendered in our version by a variety of words. In some instances it would be absolutely foolish to render it ‘into.’ For example, ‘I am not sent but INTO the lost sheep of Israel.’ Matt. xv. 24. ‘And his fellowservant fell down INTO his feet.’ Matt. xviii. 29. ‘Jesus—cometh INTO the grave.’ John xi. 38. ‘Jesus went up INTO a mountain,’ Matt. v. 1, but surely not into the earth. In the Septuagint we have the following examples. ‘And Jacob came into Shalem,—and pitched his tent INTO the city.’ Gen. xxxiii. 18. ‘When they came INTO Jordan they cut down wood.’ 2. Kings vi. 4. And in Homer; ‘I hasten INTO Achilles.’ Iliad xv. 402. Though *eis* certainly means into, when the context gives it that meaning, it is unquestionably used in a variety of

other senses, in instances without number. Why should it be assumed that it means 'into,' absolutely, in this narrative, when there is not a single circumstance mentioned to show that it has such a meaning, or that the eunuch even stood in the water? However strongly our brethren may speak in defence of their opinion, they can never make it certain that the eunuch went 'into' the water, and much less that he was put under it; and nothing short of demonstrative proof can establish the doctrine of immersion, in the face of so large a body of clear evidence as appears against it.

Our word *to* is equivalent to *eis*. *To*, like *eis*, means into, when the context requires it to have that meaning. In our common parlance, going to a house, going to heaven, and going to London, denote going into those places. It is the same with *eis*; but going down *eis* the water does not necessarily give *eis* the sense of 'into,' since it may as properly mean to the water as into it. There is no interior in water, that it should necessarily have the sense of into, to the exclusion of every other. That Philip and the eunuch went down from the chariot to the water, is the true and obvious sense of the account. Mr. Rice states that Scapula, Bretschneider, Buttman in his Greek grammar, Stuart, and others affirm its primary signification to be *to*. Mr. Thorn has ascertained that in the New Testament it is rendered *to* and *unto* no less than five hundred and thirty-eight times; and Mr. A. Campbell, in his own version, has rendered it *to* in other places; thus shewing that in his judgment it means *to* in instances wherein our translators have rendered it 'into'. Indeed the apostle John, in xx. 4, uses it in express contradistinction to into. He says that having out-run Peter he 'came first *eis* the sepulchre'; and in the next verse it is added that, though he stooped down, and looked in, and saw the linen clothes lying, YET WENT HE NOT IN'. John went *eis* that is to the sepulchre,

but it is distinctly denied that he then went 'into' it. Why then should it be confidently affirmed that the eunuch went into the water, and be inferred that he went under it, when the very same word is used in reference to the water, as denotes 'to' the sepulchre, but does not denote 'into' it?

The true sense of an indefinite preposition must be ascertained by its connections. As, in this instance, down to the water is the natural sense of the narrative; as 'to' agrees with the primary meaning of *eis*, and frees the baptism from difficulties in which the immersionists' opinion involves it, and does not incur one; down to the water is the true sense, rather than down into, as shewing that the eunuch went down under water. This preposition therefore does not afford the least proof that Philip dipped the eunuch when he baptized him.

Had the immersion theory been true, baptizo would naturally and necessarily have been construed with *eis* in reference to the baptizing element, in the sense of dipping into water. Our Lord commands us to baptize all nations *eis* the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and Paul affirms that saints are baptized *eis* Jesus Christ, *eis* his death, and *eis* one body. When he enquired of certain disciples, 'Into what were ye baptized?' they answered, not *eis* cold water, but *eis* John's baptism. Acts xix. 3. *Eis* is thus construed with baptizo in reference to the authority, object, or nature of baptism, but not in reference to the element. Baptized *eis* water, and baptized *eis* the Holy Ghost, had such forms of words been used, would (because the sense would admit of no other meaning,) have meant into water, and into the Holy Ghost, and would thus have been decisive evidence in favour of immersion; but the absence of such expressions is evidence against it. Never does the word of God say that a person was baptized *eis* or into water, or *eis* the Holy Ghost, or that any person should be so baptized. The preposition used in connection

with baptizo is *en*, as denoting the element WITH which, and not *into* which, we should be baptized. Thus Jesus said, 'John truly baptized WITH water, but ye shall be baptized WITH the Holy Ghost, not many days hence.—And ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is COME UPON you.' Acts 1. 5 & 8.

In the narrative of the eunuch's baptism it is also said, that 'they came up *out of* the water,' and this word, like *into*, appears to some readers to favour the opinion that he was immersed. The original word is *ek*. Now if *eis* does not, as a certain matter of fact, take Philip and the eunuch 'into' the water, and much less put the eunuch under it, it will be difficult to shew that *ek* necessarily brings them 'out of' the water. If they went not 'into,' and still less under, *ek* cannot mean that they came 'out of.' *Eκ* can bring them backward, only so far as *eis* takes them forward. The progress from the water, cannot be greater than the progress to the water.

To prove from *ek* only that it is a matter of fact that they came 'out of' the water, it must be proved that *ek* means 'out of,' and nothing else. If it have any other meaning than 'out of,' if like *eis* and *en* it be a preposition whose specific sense in each place must be learned from the context, it must at least be uncertain that it means 'out of' here, because the sense of the narrative does not give it that meaning; and if it is uncertain, the immersion argument, as founded on this word, falls to the ground; because it is uncertain, as far as *ek* is concerned, whether they came 'out of' the water or not. If it can be proved that *ek* means 'out of' absolutely and always, it must then be admitted that they were at least PARTIALLY in the water. This is the very utmost that can be inferred from *eis* and *ek*, or 'into' and 'out of,' if we adopt the immersionist's interpretation; but this will not prove his theory to be true, for they might have gone down 'into' the water, and have come up 'out of' it, though Philip baptized the eunuch by sprink-

ling. So that if facts would allow us to concede that they went 'into' and came 'out of' water, this would only shew that they stood partly, perhaps ankle deep or sandal deep, in water; and all the rest, as to the eunuch being submerged, would be mere conjecture and assumption, which prove nothing.

If *ek* really means 'out of,' there is no evidence to shew how far or how deep the two persons went into and came out of the water; but if, as is probable, it here signifies FROM the water, immersion can no more be deduced from *ek* than sprinkling. There being no circumstances in the narrative to shew that *ek* has the sense of 'out of,' extrinsic evidences must be adduced to prove that it always means 'out of,' to make it certain that it has such a meaning here; for if it has other meanings in other instances, it may have some other meaning in this. Dr. Carson felt this truth, and accordingly he says, p. 131, 'I say that it always signifies out of.' And in p. 135, he denies 'That *ek* is ever used when the object departing is not supposed to have commenced its departure within the object from which it departs.' If this be true, *ek* should be rendered 'out of' whenever it occurs. How foolishly it would read if it were thus rendered, and how untrue Dr. Carson's assertions are, will appear from the following extracts, in which the sense of *ek* is generally from, and occasionally for, of, by, and on. 'I proceeded and came OUT OF God.' JOHN VIII. 42. 'As Jesus passed by he saw a man which was blind OUT OF his birth.' JOHN IX. 1. 'The baptism of John, was it OUT OF heaven or OUT OF men?' MARK XI. 30. 'Christ was raised up OUT OF the dead.' ROM. VI. 4. 'The tree is known OUT OF of its fruit.' MATTHEW XII. 33. 'He agreed with the labourers OUT OF a penny a day.' MATT. XX. 2. 'Neither repented they OUT OF their murders, nor OUT OF their sorceries, nor OUT OF their fornications, nor OUT OF their thefts.' REV. IX. 21. 'He riseth OUT OF supper.' JOHN XIII. 4. 'All these have I kept OUT OF my youth up.' LUKE XVIII. 21. 'Judas received a

band of men, &c. OUT OF the chief priests, &c. 'JOHN XVIII. 3. 'Grant that my two sons may sit, the one OUT OF thy right hand, and the other OUT OF thy left.' MATH. XX. 21. 'Ye are OUT OF beneath, I am OUT OF above; Ye are OUT OF this world, I am not OUT OF this world.' JOHN VIII. 23. The following instances, of the use of *ek* in the sense of FROM, have been selected by learned men from the works of Homer, Thucydides, Herodotus, &c. 'He is said to have had some disease OUT OF his birth.' 'Who forming men OUT OF the extremity of the foot, making a statue.' 'OUT OF the Sicilian mountains, the sea is extended far into the east.' 'He cut the hairs OUT OF the heads of lambs.' 'The mountains extend OUT OF sea to sea.' 'The promontory was steep OUT OF the sea, and not easily attacked OUT OF the land.' 'The road OUT OF Abdera to Ister' 'She led him OUT OF the gate to the inner apartment.' These examples, which might be greatly multiplied, clearly prove that *ek*, *per se*, is a word of undeterminate sense, and that of its varied senses, that which is true in each case must be learned from the scope of the narrative.

In the English New Testament *ek* is rendered by various words, according to the sense, it is said by as many as twenty. Mr. Thorn affirms that it is rendered FROM, one hundred and eighty-six times; it should, for anything that appears to the contrary, be rendered FROM in his narrative, and then it would be one hundred and eighty-seven times; as FROM agrees with the history, and frees it from the difficulties of the immersion hypothesis.

As Philip and the Eunuch were in a carriage, and the water,—as it always lies in hollows, lay in a low place, it was, of course, necessary for them to go down to the water for the eunuch to be baptized; and after the baptism for them to go up FROM the water to the carriage. But immersionists affirm that if the baptism were by sprinkling, it was not necessary for them to leave the chariot, as so opulent a person

would not travel across a desert without a supply of water. This however is a mere conjecture. Had he been crossing the great desert at that time, he might have had water with him; but even then it might not have been so accessible as that which lay by the way-side. But the desert which he was crossing was merely a narrow strip of desert; and between Jerusalem and Gaza there were, in those days, various places where refreshment might have been obtained on the road. In going to Jerusalem, the eunuch had passed along this very route shortly before. He consequently must have known that there was water in the desert. It lay in his way, and he must have seen it in going to Jerusalem, as well as in returning from thence. Knowing that water was to be had there, and at other places on his journey, he would not encumber himself uselessly by carrying it with him. There is nothing to show that he had water with him, or why he should have had. Philip therefore could not have baptized him by sprinkling, as the symbol of purifying grace and of Christian discipleship, without going down to the water.

We do not deduce sprinkling from the prepositions TO and FROM, but we say that even if it could be proved, which it never has been, that they should be here rendered 'into' and 'out of,' no man can logically deduce dipping from them. These little words, on which some persons have laid so much stress, whichever way they be rendered, do not describe the mode of baptism actually observed at all. They describe only what took place before the baptism and after it. A student of the English version of God's holy word, may imagine that he ascertains the truth by regarding such words as 'into' and 'out of,' but he draws inferences from them which neither the inspired original, nor the circumstances of the case, will establish. No learned and really candid immersionist builds his faith on such words, for they prove nothing that is material to this controversy. Indeed were it

not that prejudice has unhappily so far influenced some men, as to induce them to become uncandid, and that many sincere and anxious inquirers have not the necessary aids to a correct understanding of these little words, this exegesis would not have been necessary.

Though the English prepositions seem to favour the practice of dipping, all reasoning founded on them is utterly uncertain and unsound; and they are quoted so often only for want of better proofs. Writers of small tracts, which are widely circulated, and sundry preachers, quote them as though the original meant 'into' and 'out of,' absolutely, and nothing else. Such persons must know that they also mean TO and FROM, or they must not. In the former case they must be wanting in honesty, in thus handling the word of the Lord deceitfully; and in the latter, they must be ignorant and therefore incompetent teachers, on such a subject.

As the language of the narrative does not definitely express an immersion, so neither do the circumstances imply that it took place. The locality was that part of the way between Jerusalem and Gaza 'which is desert.' Places are desert not because there is 'much water there,' but from the want of water. Isaiah mentions it as a figurative phenomenon, to appear in Christ's kingdom, that 'In the wilderness waters shall break out, and streams in the desert.' xxxv. 36. Can it be supposed that there was a river sufficiently deep for immersion in that dry and thirsty land? Deserts are so from the want of water. They do not contain natural baptistries. Their streams are not perennial. The travellers were passing over barren sands, and dry and arid wastes. In such places the rainy season may form deposits and scanty rills of water in low places, but they are shallow, and soon dry up. Had the eunuch been baptized at a river or lake, its name would have been mentioned, but it is denominated 'a certain water.' He had gone to a great dis-

tance to worship at Jerusalem, and probably, as Dr. Kitto suggests, at the great Passover festival, when many proselytes repaired to Jerusalem. If so, the rainy season was just over, and some little collections of superabundant water, which the earth failed to absorb, might have been found in low hollow places. He said, 'Lo! water,' as though it were suddenly arrived at, and was so small as not to be seen until they were near to it. They did not go in search of deep water, but used the first that they met with. There is no reason to suppose that they met with water that was deep enough for dipping, and if not, he was not dipped; but if they had, the eunuch might have been baptized thereat by sprinkling, and not by immersion.

If when the eunuch said, 'Lo! here is water,' he had also said, and here are changes of raiment and dressing rooms, it would have been obvious that he had to be submerged; but how was the immersion of a person, and he of high rank, to be effected in the open country, and on the high-way, without the least preparation for such an event? Supposing pure water of a convenient depth and gentle descent to have been found, for the eunuch to have been dipped, one of three courses must have been taken. Either he must have been dipped in his travelling dress, and afterwards have sat still in his chariot for a considerable time, in thoroughly drenched clothes, and at the hazard of his life, so that he could hardly, in so sorry a plight, have gone on his way rejoicing; or this first lord of the treasury of Ethiopia must have been immersed stark naked, in the presence of the evangelist and the attendants,—for that he had at least one attendant is certain from his having commanded the chariot to stand still; or in changing his dresses he must have exposed his person twice, for a chariot is an open carriage. Moreover, if an immersion took place, Philip must have gone into the water with the eunuch, to perform the rite. Did he then, and the other, dress and undress in the presence of each

other, of the charioteer, and possibly of men and women who were passing by? But did Philip, who was a pedestrian, travelling alone on foot, carry a dipping-suit with him, to be ready for every baptism, notwithstanding that the Lord expressly commanded his disciples to take but one coat on a journey? Or did he receive clothes from the eunuch in exchange for his own? Or did he dip with his usual dress on, and retain it, dripping with water, on his person until it was dry? All these hypotheses being incredible, it is equally incredible that the eunuch was immersed.

As it is thus clear that there could not have been an immersion in this baptism, there must have been a small effusion of water from the hands of the administrator. All the reasons which have been and will hereafter be adduced to prove that baptism is the generic name of the ordinance, and that sprinkling is the true mode of solemnizing it, shew that the eunuch must have been baptized in that mode. There are also other reasons which the narrative itself suggests.

Baptism appears from this narrative to be so simple a rite, that ministers may administer it by the wayside, to persons whom they may happen to meet on a journey; and that there is nothing whatever to 'hinder' its observance if there be but water. This perfectly agrees with the rite of sprinkling, which might be conveniently administered to a fellow traveller on the road, and for which nothing but water is requisite.

Philip does not appear to have mentioned the subject of baptism, or if he stated the obligation, it is not likely that he would explain the mode, as the catechumen would be acquainted with the usual mode. As a proselyte, the eunuch had been baptized previously by a priestly administrator,—after some private self-ablution, when he was received as a worshipper of God. He had, shortly before, probably witnessed and been the subject of the same rite in the temple, and knew that it was the only rite which God had specifically directed administrators to solemnize.

Moreover, when Philip ascended the chariot, the eunuch had for some time been reading the prophet Isaiah. He requested an explanation of Is. LIII. 7. & 8. The sacred books were not then divided into chapters and verses. About a minute previously he had read in the seventh preceding verse, *viz* in LII. 15. that the Messiah should SPRINKLE many nations; or sprinkle clean water upon them, as Ezekiel said in reference both to the cleansing influences of the Holy Spirit, and to the purifying rite. When therefore the words to which he had called Philip's attention had been explained, and Jesus had been preached to him, as he was acquainted with the appropriate symbol of purifying grace, and as he wished to be a disciple of Christ, he requested that the rite might be administered to him, saying, 'Lo! water,'—nothing more than water is necessary, 'what doth hinder me to be baptized?' They went down from the chariot to the water. Philip baptized him immediately. And when they came up from the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing.

In this narrative there is nothing decisive to support the immersion theory; but a number of strong improbabilities are opposed to it, such as must satisfy an unbiassed inquirer that it did not take place. The baptism appears to have been a rite so simple, practicable, and easy, as could only have been administered by affusion from the hands of Philip; and that he was thus sprinkled, or affused, in the name of the triune God, agrees with all the facts of the case.

THE BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS.

When Peter had preached the gospel to this pious military officer, his kinsmen, and near friends, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. The converted Jews, being still subject to their national prejudices, were astonished that the Spirit was

poured out on the Gentiles; but Peter, whose prejudice had been removed by a vision from heaven, asked, 'Can any man forbid water, that these should be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?'

In the last instance, Philip and the eunuch, being in the open country, went to the water; but in this case, both the minister and the new converts were in a house, where there was both water and utensils to hold it. Had it been proposed to go from the house to deep water, the object would manifestly have been put to them therein; but the apostles are never said to have gone from a house to water to administer baptism, nor to have baptized at a river, unless they and the new converts were in the open air. We should do the same thing if we baptized at an open air service, and if a stream were nearer than a house. Peter did not demand who could forbid their going to water, but who could 'forbid water.' The inquiry is elliptical, and the regimen would be, into this room; for the question was not who should hinder the persons from going, but the water from coming; as though it had to be fetched into the room. Since he asked who could object to water being brought, it must have been customary to bring the water to the subjects of baptism; so that baptism could not have been by immersion, but must have been by sprinkling. God had not withheld his Spirit, who then should withhold the water? As he had poured out the Holy Ghost to baptize their souls, according to the prediction of John, who could forbid the pouring out of water, as the appointed symbol of his descent and influence, and the sign of Christian discipleship? Having 'RECEIVED the Holy Ghost,' could any man forbid that they should now receive baptismal water also? They had received the spiritual baptism from God, and were now to receive the emblematical water baptism from man. It is proper to recognize as Christians, those whom God has constituted such. There

is a beautiful agreement between the two baptisms, as administered by the Lord Jesus and by his church. Water, as a cleansing element, is an appropriate emblem of the purifying influence of the Holy Spirit. In each baptism there is a descent of the element upon the recipient; both the sign and the thing signified bear the same denomination; and the modal description of that which is purely spiritual, clearly determines the form of the visible sign.

When the facts of this case are candidly considered,—that a considerable number of persons were baptized in an apartment, that water had to be brought into the place for that purpose, and that the outpouring of the Spirit reminded Peter of the baptism of John with water, dipping must appear among such and similar associations, as altogether incongruous and foreign, as an unmeaning intruder in the Christian ritual, and as a human innovation, of no possible benefit on earth, and of no conceivable resemblance to anything from heaven.

THE 'ONE BAPTISM.'

Our brethren who believe it to be the law of Christ that his disciples should be immersed, regard 'One baptism, Eph. iv. 5, as referring to an external rite, and as teaching that there is one mode only of observing that rite; and as that mode is assumed to be immersion, 'One baptism' is read as though it meant 'one dipping,' and is sometimes quoted in condemnation of sprinkling.

If it could be proved that 'One baptism' means that there is but one true mode of baptizing with water, since it has been shown that the descent of the element is that true mode, 'One baptism' would be a condemnation of immersion, as being a second and different baptism, or rather as not being the baptism of Christianity. But as all the words of a passage must be interpreted in harmony with each other, this word does not appear to have any refer-

ence whatever to a mere rite. The Apostle is here writing on the unity of the Spirit being kept in the bond of peace; and pursuing the same theme, he states that there is one spiritual body, the church; one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, the supreme ruler of us all; one faith, or harmonious body of truth through which we are saved; one spiritual baptism, in which we all are purified, renewed, and united in spirit, by the Holy Ghost; and one God and Father of us all, whose sons we are, being justified through faith, renewed by the Spirit, and united in the one body of the church. To read 'One baptism' as meaning 'one dipping,' is greatly to detract from the spirituality and dignity of the inspired writer's theme. What an incongruous association is formed, when an outward rite, in whatever form it may be observed, is placed in the same class of great and lofty subjects as the unity of the church, of the catholic faith, and of the character and work of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! We may truly say of baptism, in this and other places in the Holy Scripture, as Dr. Carson, in p. 24. says of the classical sense of baptize, that 'The idea of water is not in the word at all;' and we may add that still less is the idea of mode. The inspired Apostle here speaks of spiritual unity, and not of ceremonial uniformity; of one spirit, and not of one form. He had previously said that there is 'one body and one Spirit,' and now by 'One baptism' he designates that holy unity of spirit of which he speaks in I. COR. XII. 13, 'By one Spirit are we all BAPTIZED into one body.' In that place as in this he descants on spiritual unity, and this is the true exposition of 'One baptism,' Paul himself being the expositor.

Had the Apostle meant that there is but one mode of water baptism, why should he not also have said 'One Lord's Supper,' which the Saviour so impressively instituted and enjoined in commemoration of his atoning death? especially as attempts were made

in his time to observe that sacred rite in a form that was actually sinful; whereas no attempt was made to deviate from the true mode of baptism. If he had referred to one rite, he would probably have referred to the other; for certainly the Lord's supper is at least co-ordinate with baptism, as a Christian institution; but he speaks of that baptism which we receive by 'the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.'

The erroneous interpretation of 'One baptism,' agrees with the exaggerated importance which immersionists, and baptismal-regenerationists attach to the sacred ordinance, though they may differ as to the mode. It substitutes mere ritualism for the spirit of religion, and in respect to this word makes the purely spiritual teaching of Scripture of no effect. It deduces uniformity in a visible and formal rite, from a word which teaches that a oneness of spirit and unity of faith and love subsists among true Christians, who are baptized by the Holy Ghost. Thus the act of man is supposed to be meant instead of the act of God; ritual uniformity is understood rather than catholic unity; and instead of the cleansing of the heart by the Spirit, as the source and means of unity, an outward and emblematical baptism is inferred, which unhappily has given rise to disunion and strife. However sound immersionists may be in the doctrines of the gospel,—and we rejoice to recognise them as being, for the most part, brethren beloved in the Lord, sound Protestants, thorough Nonconformists, and evangelical Christians, that of the 'baptistry' is calculated to lead to serious error. That principle of interpretation which resolves purely spiritual things into outward rites and institutions, however sacred and obligatory they may be, teems with dangerous results. Were it carried out to its full extent, it would lead to consequences which our beloved 'Baptist' brethren, equally with ourselves, would regard with great alarm. Some of the wildest forms

of millenarianism, and most erratic and pernicious forms of Romanism, are founded on that principle. Indeed it contains the whole germ of papal error.

THE CHRISTIAN BURIED WITH CHRIST BY BAPTISM.

As there is no allusion whatever to water in the 'One baptism,' neither is there any such allusion in Rom. vi. 3. 4. where it is stated that, 'So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were' baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' Baptizo and baptisma are here used in a purely spiritual sense, with no reference to anything ritual. The immersionist discerns no specific allusion to dipping in being baptized into Jesus Christ, nor can he show any resemblance between immersion and crucifixion in being baptized into his death; but he sees an allusion to that rite in our being 'buried with Christ by baptism into death.' The true sense of this passage, which teaches the doctrine of entire sanctification, has been entirely mistaken; it has been pressed into the service of the 'baptistry,' and is supposed to sanction the practice of being put under water.

Christians are here said to be buried with Christ by baptism into death; and immersion, some men say, is a figure of that spiritual burial. But that word burial itself is but a figure of a spiritual truth. The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, are referred to by Paul as figures of Christian experience. Our being buried with Christ denotes the body of sin being entombed, as a corrupt and perished thing, and our being risen from a death unto sin, to a higher, purer, and happier life, or into 'newness of life.' Immersion cannot represent the Christian as being thus buried with Christ, because one figure cannot represent another. The spiritual burial refers to the sepulchre of Christ, and not to the 'baptistry' of the immersionist.

That a Christian rite should be the figure of a figure, is as unphilosophical, and as untrue, as the ancient fiction of the shadow of a shade.

It is frequently said that immersion is the representation of the burial and resurrection of our Lord; and Dr. Carson says 'The immersed person dies under the water, and for a moment lies buried with Christ.' p. 157. That this rite represents the Lord's burial, and that when immersed a person is buried with him in a 'liquid tomb,' appears to be a common and cherished opinion of Christians who practise dipping as baptism. They assume that water baptism is meant in the passage under consideration, and Mr. Daniell asks in p. 18, 'If the rite were performed by sprinkling could it be called a burial? How can that be buried or covered which is not immersed?'

Thus the hypotheses that Christians immersed when they baptized, that immersion is a representation of Christ's burial, and that therefore immersion is and ever will be the true mode of baptism, are inferred from a supposed allusion to the rite, as one in which Christians are buried with the Lord. But before it can be certain that there is here an allusion to an external rite, and that that rite is dipping, it must be proved that dipping really is Christian baptism; because until that is proved, it cannot be certain that Paul alludes to it. The alledged allusion cannot be adduced as proof, for antecedent proof is required to establish the fact of there being such an allusion. Immersionists completely invert the logical order of the argument. That which they assume as the ground of proof, *viz.* that there is an allusion to an outward rite, is the very question at issue. Instead of first proving immersion to be Christian baptism, it is inferred to be so, on the ground of a supposed allusion. It is not proved from the passage, it is assumed to explain it; but the passage cannot be logically adduced in proof of the hypothesis which is assumed to explain it, for an assumption is not an argument. It is clear there-

fore that this passage does not contain an intrinsic proof of immersion, and that the opinion that such a practice existed as Christian baptism, so as to be possible for it to be alluded to, requires extrinsic proofs, which it has been shown do not exist. But, apart from all consideration of such extrinsic proofs, let us, looking at the passage and its context, endeavour to ascertain if there is or can be any such allusion.

The dipping of a person in water in the name of the Holy Trinity, we are assured, represents the entombment of Christ; and as he was buried in the earth, it is a Christian duty that his disciples be for an instant buried in water. This hallucination has impressed the minds and confirmed the prejudices of many intelligent and excellent Christians, who, from education or other causes, have attached themselves to the theory of immersion; and it is a popular, and—upon a merely superficial and *prima-facie* view,—a somewhat plausible sophism, which often passes current, as though it bore the genuine stamp and superscription of a truth. A brief examination however will suffice to refute and expose it.

At the very threshold of our inquiry, an objection presents itself which is fatal to this opinion, *viz.* that baptism is never said to have the most remote specific reference to the work of our Saviour, any farther than to his gift of the Spirit after his ascension to heaven. There are two simple and beautiful rites in Christianity, which symbolize the work of the Saviour, and of the Holy Spirit, respectively. Under the law there were corresponding rites of sacrifice and purification. In the Lord's supper we have a symbol of the atonement, as effected by the broken body and shed blood of Christ; and in baptism a symbol of the cleansing and sanctifying grace of the Spirit. Thus the Christian ritual, in its two ordinances, is harmonious, appropriate, and complete; but the opinion that baptism is a figurative burial with Christ, and that it represents his burial and resurrection, destroys that completeness

and harmony, deprives the Holy Spirit's work of its appropriate symbol, disparages its importance, ascribes the reference of both rites to Christ, and is opposed to the whole tenor of Scripture. The baptismal symbol is commonly used in both Testaments to describe the descent and agency of the Spirit. Baptism refers as specifically to the work of the Spirit, as the Lord's supper does to the sacrifice of Christ; and it is as improper to regard baptism as a symbol of the work of Christ, as it would be to regard the Lord's supper as having reference to the work of the Spirit. Since therefore baptism has no specific reference to the Saviour, it cannot represent his burial; so that the immersionist's exposition of this passage is wholly incorrect. Accordingly, the baptisms during our Lord's life had no such reference, and it does not appear that baptism had any signification after his death other than it had before. Such a meaning is never attributed to baptism by the sacred writers, nor is there a single allusion to it, directly or indirectly. As the facts and figures of the New Testament shew that baptism was administered by the descent of a little water, such a supposed allusion is manifestly a mistake. It is a mere inference from a highly figurative passage, and that inference is wholly unsupported, and wholly opposed by Scripture, and it is fanciful, perplexing, and contradictory.

But the entombment of Christ is not the only thing which baptism is supposed to represent. Dr. Carson says in p. 475, that water is the 'womb' out of which the baptized person proceeds; and both he and Messrs Burt, S. Stennett, Maclean, Ryland, and others speak of it as an emblematical washing. The use of water as an emblematical purification under the law, naturally and obviously suggested the idea of spiritual purity. That signification has never been altered. Baptism being mentioned in connection with the promise of the Spirit, and the baptism of the Spirit having in some instances been received concurrently with water baptism, show

that the ordinance has a direct reference to the cleansing agency of the Spirit on the mind. But it cannot represent three such dissimilar things as a cleansing, a womb, and a grave; so that a person may be emblematically cleansed, born, and buried in the same act. If he goes into the water as a grave, he surely cannot be raised up and walk out of it as from a womb. If, as Mr. Gibbs says, it is a laver, and as many immersionists admit, it is an emblem of renewing grace, it cannot be a burial; unless men are cleansed in a tomb, and buried in a laver. Such a confusion of figures makes them destroy each other. Since baptism undoubtedly is a symbol of the washing of regeneration, it cannot be a representation of Christ's burial.

But assuming that baptism has some reference to Christ, it may be asked,—looking at the question *a priori*, why it should be supposed, since nothing is appointed in the Christian economy but for obvious and important reasons, that his burial, above all things, should have to be represented by a religious rite, in the person of every disciple; and why should not every Christian have some other rites solemnized in his person, to represent the Lord's crucifixion and resurrection? These were events of infinitely greater consequence to every Christian, and to the whole world, than his mere interment. Had he lived and died in some other country than Judea, he might not have been buried, and in that case there would have been no prediction of his burial in the prophecies. His being buried or not was, in itself, of little or no moment; whereas both his death and resurrection were indispensable to the salvation of the world. Why then, speaking *a priori* as we before said, should so comparatively immaterial an event be singled out, and be required to be publicly represented by a disagreeable, dangerous, indelicate, and often an impracticable rite, on the persons of all Christians, all over the world, and to the end of the world? If God had expressly commanded such a rite to be performed, his

word would have been our absolute law; but as he has not commanded it, and as water baptism is never mentioned as a burial, and much less as a burial with Christ, and as the question now turns on the true meaning of a metaphor, which some brethren misunderstand, we are entitled to ask, if, in the absence of all evidence, it can be deemed probable that he would require that so comparatively minor an event as the mere interment of Christ, should be set forth in the person of 'every creature;' by a ceremony too which is very unlike it, and which, if it resembled it ever so correctly, can answer no conceivable good end,—as a resemblance to the burial; and which is unmeaning, and useless, and withal dangerous and unseemly?

But suppose it to be proper to represent the Lord's burial, it must require a very fanciful imagination to discover any resemblance between that event and a person being plunged overhead in water. Had he been buried in water,—if such a hypothesis may be reverently mentioned,—there might have been some apparent show of reason for this strange misconception; but in that case, a scenic representation could answer no valuable end, and would be opposed to the spirit and character of Christianity. Emblems of purely spiritual things are consistent with the gospel, but scenic representations of simple facts are unsanctioned by it; they savour of superstition, and are calculated to strike and impose upon the senses, rather than to instruct the mind. Christian congregations sometimes sing, as they look on the 'baptistry,'

'Was not the Lord who came to save,
Interred in such a liquid grave?' RIFON'S col. h. 452, v. 4.

He certainly was not. His entombment was not an immersion, that we should be buried WITH him, by being momentarily placed under water. His burial was not a baptism of any kind, that we, to represent his entombment, should be literally buried by water bap-

tism. When he spoke of having 'a baptism to be baptized with,' he did not refer to the sepulchre. The sepulchre was not a 'baptistry,' a 'liquid grave,' or a 'watery tomb.' In what way then can a man be literally buried WITH Christ, by a hasty dip in water; or by being dipped three times, as some ancients were, to denote the three days in which our Lord tenanted the tomb; or even if, with the aid of breathing apparatus, he were immersed for three days? Water had no connection with the Redeemer's burial. We are not buried with him in water, but, as it is distinctly affirmed by the inspired word, into his death, or, as afterwards explained, into the likeness of his death. That likeness in us to him is purely spiritual, and is the result of spiritual baptism. The Scriptures never say that we are baptized into water, or buried in water. In the whole argument of Paul there is no reference to water, nor to the Christian's body, but to the sanctification of the soul by a death unto sin, through the Spirit, whose purifying influence is the baptism of which the Apostle speaks.

Many persons, as they read of being buried with Christ by baptism, conceiving that water baptism is meant, think only of an English grave. But a person walking into water up to the waist, and having the upper part of his body hastily dipped, bears no resemblance to the interment of a corpse. In the grave earth is placed over the dead, whereas in the 'baptistry' the living are not covered with water but dipped into it. By what stretch of the imagination can we discover a resemblance between giving a person a hasty plunge, and the awe-inspiring act of committing the dead to the earth? between an immerser and a sexton? between a pit of water or a stream and a grave? and between the baptismal formula and a deeply mournful funeral service? Moreover, the entombed body remains in the grave, whereas the dipped body is instantly raised up again. And yet the Scripture does not say that we were once

buried with Christ by baptism, as though it had been a ceremonial and momentary burial, but it affirms, as it reads in the margin, that we ARE baptized into Jesus Christ, and into his death; and as our common version correctly renders it, 'we ARE buried with him by baptism into death.' This burial is not momentary, like dipping. It continues. We are now and always buried with him by spiritual baptism, not into water, but spiritually into death. The verb 'are,' is in the present tense, and will ever be so. This burial is permanent. The body of sin is put away, and we are risen with Christ into newness of life; as we are delivered from sin, and have acquired those affections and habits of mind, which are holy in their nature, and heavenward in their tendency; so that the spiritual state of a baptized and faithful Christian, which the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord are taken to represent, is one that endures.

If there be so great dissimilarity between immersion and an English interment, the contrast between that rite and the burial of our Lord is still greater. His sepulchre presented no resemblance to an English grave, and still less to a 'baptistry,' of water. It was a cave or side-room, nearly on a level with the ground, and hewn out of a solid rock. It had a low entrance at the side, which was closed by a great stone being rolled against it. Thus the two Marys sat opposite to the sepulchre. Math. xxvi. 61. How then was the Lord buried? He was not lowered downwards like a corpse into an English grave, or like a living person when dipped into water; but he was carried into the cavernous tomb, and placed on a shelf, or in a niche, 'as the manner of the Jews was to bury,' and there he lay. If then it were proper for us, while living, to be ceremonially buried with Christ, can a person's walking in water until it reaches his waist, and being then plunged overhead, be deemed so resemblant an act, as to be entitled a burial with Christ by dipping? Between carrying a dead body through a door into a

cave, and plunging a living body in water, there is no resemblance, either emblematical, pictorial, or otherwise; so that such a rite cannot be meant by the Apostle.

The sentiments of all Christians are entitled to all the respect that we can pay to them, consistently with the obligations of truth; but certainly, while we venerate every institution of the Lord, we cannot but regard all scenic representations of the death and burial of the Lord, whether observed in papal or protestant churches, as being improper and puerile. When looking on a water 'baptistry,' let the image of the sepulchre in the garden, together with the actual scene of the Saviour's burial appear, and the whole charm of the burial by a hasty dip in water, and the argument connected with it, vanishes away like the illusive and evanescent scenery of a dissolving view.

In the ordinance of the Lord's supper, communicants are not said to die with Christ, as Christians who immerse say that they are 'buried with him,' when hastily immersed. Their own persons pass through no ceremony to represent his crucifixion; nor is there any such resemblance to the death of Christ in our eating bread and drinking wine, as is attributed to the burial of Christ in immersion. The Lord's supper commemorates his death, but when we receive it we are not dead with him, as the immersionist professes to be buried with him, during the instant that he is covered with water. The bread which we break and eat, is an emblem of his body as GIVEN for us; and the wine we drink, of his blood, as shed for the REMISSION of sins. This is a beautiful and appropriate rite, in which we show forth the Lord's death, as an atonement for our sins; but we do not represent his death and crucifixion, as the burial is said to be represented. It is a commemorative symbol of the great sacrifice, as baptism is the symbol of the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit; and it is solemnized, not because one of a cluster of metaphors is singled out and construed as being allusive to it,

but in obedience to a simple and express command; and we thus testify that faith and love of which he is the object, and our communion with each other, as his disciples. In Rom. vi. 6, it is said that ‘ Our old man is crucified with Christ.’ Now we are buried with Christ by baptism, as we are crucified with him,—spiritually. Mistaken Romanists have represented our Lord’s death and burial, and spectators have been deeply impressed with such scenes. Immersionists may deem their mode of representing his burial to be the only true and proper mode; but all such representations of Scripture facts are unauthorized, and incongruous with the spirit of Christianity.

The passages in which we are described as being dead, buried, risen, &c., must all be interpreted harmoniously with each other, either in a literal or spiritual sense; but either principle of interpretation must be fatal to immersion. If it be admitted that this burial into death by baptism is purely spiritual, what we contend for as its undoubted meaning is conceded; and thus the opinion that men are buried with Christ by dipping is relinquished. But if the literal sense be adopted, the corresponding figures in the context must be also understood literally; and the impossibility of their being thus understood, must be equally fatal to the opinion that immersion is meant. If we are buried with Christ by being dipped in water, in what sense are we buried into death? It is said that we are baptized *eis* Jesus Christ, and *eis* his death. If baptizo means to dip, and *cis* into, as immersionists affirm, in what way are we dipped into Jesus Christ, and into his death? The crucifixion of the old man with Christ, and our being dead with him, and risen again, must correspond with our being buried with Christ; and if the latter denotes our being put under water, what is meant by the former. If the literal sense is given up in one instance, it must be given up altogether; for all these metaphors must be interpreted by the same rule. To understand

one of them literally, and others spiritually; to be spiritually crucified, dead, and risen again, but literally buried with Christ in water, and, as Dr. Carson says, p. 157, to 'die while momentarily immersed,' is mysticism that is difficult to understand.

That spiritual state which is described in Rom. vi. 4, as a burial with Christ by baptism, is described in the next verse, as our being 'Planted together in the likeness of his death.' If the Apostle is to be understood in a literal sense, he must here also allude to the mode of baptism; so that baptism cannot be immersion, or it must be a partial immersion only, the body being like a tree, partly in water and partly out. Were there a denomination of Christians who practised baptism after the mode which this word 'planted' indicates, they would have better authority for that mode than for immersion; because planting is expressly stated to be a 'likeness' of his death, whereas the baptism is not stated to be a likeness of his burial. The papists of the Roman and English churches, also maintain that there are allusions to water baptism in this place; and in order to baptize into Christ's death, and as a 'likeness' of his death, they make the sign of the cross. The only effectual way to overturn their conclusion, is to deny the soundness of their premises.*

* The following is a part of the reasoning of Mr. Peter Edwards, in his 'Candid reasons for renouncing the principles of Antipedobaptism,' published nearly at the close of the last century.

We have here (Rom. vi. 3. 4.) three things; 1. a baptizing into Christ, 2. into his death, 3. into his burial; and the last is made the consequence of the first. To form the antithesis, we must distinguish between the life and death of Christ, and then it will be; we are baptized first into the life of Christ, then into the death of Christ, and last of all into his burial. Now if baptism brings us into each of these, and one of them, as the 'Baptists' say, is an allusion to the mode of baptizing, then for the same reason so must the other two. That is, his life must allude to the mode, so must his death, and so must his burial. And the reason is, because baptism unites us to him in each of these. And if all these are to allude to the

The only facts to which these figures allude, and upon which they are founded, are the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. To complete the figurative description, it was necessary that we, who are crucified, dead, and risen with Christ, should be viewed as being also buried with him. There is a baptism into Christ, into his death, and into his burial. To understand this, it is not necessary to refer to the idea of immersion, or to any rite, but to the death and burial of Christ, and to baptism by the Spirit. If there is an allusion to water in one place, there must be in the other two places, which would render them unintelligible. Baptism is sometimes used ritually, with no mode, I should be glad to know what kind of mode it must at last be, which is to bear a resemblance to every one. The life of Christ was action, his death a crucifixion, and his burial the inclosure of his body in the cavity of a rock. The mode therefore must be threefold; it must represent action, crucifixion, and inclosing in a rock; because, to pursue the notion of the 'Baptists,' his life, death, and burial, must all have an allusion to the mode of baptism.

There is no sect, I should suppose, that use a mode of baptism to which all these will agree. The Romanists use salt, oil, and spittle; but whether they intend an allusion to the life of Christ, I cannot take upon me to affirm. Yet as they must have some allusion, the salt may allude to his life of teaching, the spittle to his life of miracles, and the oil to his life of munificence. The clergy of the 'Church of England' use the sign of the cross, and this is to allude to the crucifixion of Christ. The 'Baptists' use immersion, and this to allude to the burial of Christ. Now if we could unite all these in one, we should have a tolerable allusion to our Lord's life, death, and burial; but when each is taken separately, there is a deficiency in point of allusion. The English clergy are deficient in alluding only to the crucifixion, but not to the life and burial. The Romanists are deficient in alluding only to the life and crucifixion, but not to the burial. The 'Baptists' are deficient in alluding only to the burial, but not to the life and crucifixion. I know not whether these different communities take their document from this part of holy writ; but certainly they have the same ground, if they choose, to reason in the same way. But as the 'Baptists' avowedly do this, and are at the same time so deficient in the business of allusion, it would become them to set about a reform in the mode of their baptism; it being at present wanting in two articles, *viz.* the life and crucifixion, that is to say, the sign of the cross, &c.

immediate reference to what is spiritual; and sometimes it is used spiritually, with no immediate reference to anything ritual. Since the word baptism is used by Christ, in Acts I. 5, by John the Baptist in Math. III. 11, by Peter in Acts XI. 16, and by Paul in I. Cor. XII. 13, & Eph. IV. 5, in reference to the Holy Spirit, in express contradistinction to water; why should it be assumed that water baptism is meant, or even alluded to in this very spiritual theme; and not the promise of the Father, the great gift of the Christian dispensation? The baptism by which we are buried with Christ into death, is that of the soul, and not of the body; it is a baptism with the Spirit, and not with water; and it is received, not from man, but from the Saviour himself, according to his own promise.

The above exposition of Rom. VI. 4, equally applies to the parallel passage in Col. II. 12, 'Buried with him in baptism.' In the preceding verse, the gentile Colossians are said to have been 'Circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision' of the Spirit 'of Christ.' When it is said that we are 'buried with him in baptism,' it is added, 'WHEREIN also ye are risen with him.' We are not risen from this burial in baptism by emerging out of water, but, as is expressly affirmed, 'Through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.' Both parts of this antithesis must certainly correspond with each other, and since it is expressly and repeatedly stated that we are spiritually risen, it must mean that we are spiritually buried, and not that we are immersed in water. The burial of Christ suggests the figure of that change of heart which is effected by renewing grace, and that grace is the baptism of which the Apostle speaks.

All the transitions which he describes, take place in the Christian's mind, and have no allusion whatever to any rite relating to his body. The crucifixion and

death which correspond to the crucifixion and death of Christ, refer to the death of sin in the soul, and the painful conflicts attendant upon that death; and the resurrection with Christ is an entrance into 'newness of life;' so that the burial must also be purely spiritual, and not ritual, and if the burial be spiritual so must the baptism.

Why should a spiritual sense be assigned to all these figures but one, and that one be selected, and be literally interpreted, to prop an opinion, and to sanction a favourite practice of immersing the bodies of men? Christ was circumcised, crucified, dead, buried, and raised to life again, and so are we spiritually; but none of these things are to be represented by rites. It is not the body of flesh, but the body of the sins of the flesh that dies, and is buried or put away as an offensive thing, when we receive the baptism of the Spirit. As at the resurrection of the dead, we shall leave all that is corrupt and vile in the grave in which we were buried, and shall rise to eternal life in an uncorrupted and glorified nature; so when buried with Christ through the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that personification of sin which is denominated the body of sin, is cast away as a loathsome thing, and we rise into a new state of mind, and walk in newness of life. We thus become 'new creatures' through a death unto sin, and a life unto righteousness. All this is set forth, not by dipping persons over head in water, but by the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This saving baptism is that of the Holy Ghost, and it has no more allusion to a bathe in water, than to the fire of a funeral pile. The burial is an allusion to the entombment of Christ, and not to the plunging of men, and the baptism to the influence of the Holy Spirit; and this spiritual burial is stated to be the result of our having been baptized into Jesus Christ, and baptized into his death. Whenever immersionists read of baptism, their minds are filled with phantasms of deep water; and being mis-

led by the sound of these words, they have entirely mistaken their sense.

A consideration of the whole drift of the Apostle's argument will fully confirm these views. In the former part of his epistle to the Romans, he had shown that we are justified by faith, apart from all acts of obedience to the moral law. He then refutes the objection that that doctrine must encourage sin, and shows that so far from doing so, it leads, in connection with renewing grace, to true holiness. He is not writing about outward rites, nor alluding to them, but to refute the notion that justification by faith leads to sin; and in doing so, he speaks not of immersion in water, but of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord, as figurative representations of the transitions to which a believer's mind is subject, in being sanctified to God. The justified have, in law, been dead, buried, and raised again with or in him; because he passed through death and the grave, as their substitute, and their Saviour. By the renewal of our hearts in righteousness, analogous changes also take place in our character and state, through the atonement and Spirit of Christ, so that we are crucified, buried, and risen with him spiritually. Those persons who have been immersed, have not been buried with Christ by baptism into death, unless they have been baptized by the Holy Ghost; and they would have been thus baptized had they not been immersed. All those who are dead indeed unto sin, and are risen with Christ to the enjoyment of heavenly blessings, are spiritually baptized into the death of Christ. All these figures agree with each other, the doctrine which they teach agrees with the whole scope and spirit of the gospel, and only a strained and unnatural interpretation can deduce the idea of water interment. Nevertheless, some Christian brethren believe that in this figurative description of the sanctification of the soul, there is an authority for plunging the body. The circumcision, crucifixion, death and resurrection, are all spiritual,

but the burial with Christ, by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, which is the true baptism, they deem to afford sanction to a kind of water burial, by being momentarily dipped. It is much to be regretted that this water hallucination has been obtruded into this sacred and beautiful cluster of figures, which set forth the most momentous change to which the mind of man can be subject; that these words should be so often quoted in defence of a rite, rather than to unfold and enforce the high privilege of being purified from sin; that any persons should have been deluded with the idea that they were 'buried with Christ by baptism into death,' when they were submerged in water, rather than when they received the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, without which neither sprinklers nor dippers can be saved; and that the form of a bodily observance should divide the Christian church, and disunite those brethren who share the same spiritual blessings in Jesus Christ.

The advocates of the deadly error of baptismal regeneration regard 'baptism,' in the passages under consideration, as alluding to water baptism, though they regard 'buried' as having a spiritual sense; and they maintain that the spiritual state is attained by the observance of the outward rite. If to overturn their error we deny the literal sense of baptism, by that denial we also relinquish the opinion that baptism means immersion, and that we must be immersed to be buried; but if the premises be admitted, it must devolve upon those who make the admission, to show that the inference in favour of baptismal regeneration is illogical and untrue.

DIPPING, AND NOT SPRINKLING, AN INNOVATION.

It having now been shown that John the Baptist, and the apostles under the authority of our divine Lord, baptized by shedding forth the element, and not by dipping the object, it is certain that any other form of baptism must have been an innovation in the

church. As immersion did not originate in any divine appointment, its origin must have been human. Nor is it surprising that it should have been so, for even in the second century, the natural aversion of the human heart to spiritual worship and service, and the natural tendency to formalism, began to appear, in the attempts which were successfully made to substitute the pomp and circumstance of imposing forms, in the place of humble-minded, meek, and heavenly piety. Our brethren who immerse affirm that sprinkling was an innovation. But all the arguments adduced to show that sprinkling or shedding forth is the true mode of baptism, prove to the contrary; and there is an additional reason to assign against such an opinion, *viz.* that this alleged corruption is unlike any of the corruptions of Christianity.

All Christian rites and forms of worship are distinguished by their simplicity, and are conveniently and easily observed; for 'the kingdom of God cometh not with observation,' and consists not in bodily exercises which profit nothing, but in 'righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Corruptions in the rites and forms of the church, have always gone from the less to the greater, from the plain, the simple, and the unostentatious, to showy and ceremonial parade. But if immersionists are right, corruption must in this one solitary instance have been an exception to the universal tendency, and have gone from the great to the lesser, and from the complex and showy ceremony to the simple and more practicable form. Every student of history is aware that enlargement, and not abridgment, was the characteristic tendency of ancient times, in reference to rites. The men of those times, instead of cultivating the heavenly-minded graces of spiritual religion, sought to make its rites important and imposing; to gratify the pride of the unsanctified heart with the idea of 'much serving;' and to have everything that is external in religion overdone. Is it credible that in one

solitary instance, and that instance an outward rite, innovation should have taken an inverted course, have gone in a direction contrary to that which it took in every other instance, and have reduced an ostentatious ceremony to a simple and easy rite? Was such a change likely to be introduced in any of those ages when superstition made every possible addition to the rubric of Christianity, and greatly magnified the importance of religious ceremonies; and when the tendency to supersede the inward and spiritual life, the unassuming and self-denying spirit of Christianity, and to resolve religion into external forms and vain show, was completely in the ascendant? Such a hypothesis—apart from the historical evidence to the contrary, is in the highest degree improbable.

BAPTISM IN THE EARLY CHURCHES.

The testimony of ecclesiastical history is of no value, as a guide to truth, any farther than as it agrees with the Holy Scriptures. Some of the wildest phantasms of the human mind may find sanction in the writings of the 'early fathers;' but even amongst their most erratic writings, imperishable truth is sometimes found, in indistinct and broken forms.

Averse as human nature is to spiritual religion, it can never do too much to multiply and magnify religious rites. The proud and self-righteous heart of man, instead of being submissive to the righteousness of God by faith in Christ, and meekly seeking the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, is ever wishful to 'do' much to be saved, and is prone to ascribe undue importance to external forms. Many evidences of this spirit appear in the early history of the church. Its growth and development were rapid. Even in the second century, very childish ceremonies and pernicious errors began to prevail; and Mosheim affirms that there was a perplexing variety in the ritual of the early churches. To such an ex-

tent had these formalities and abuses grown in the fourth century, that Augustine complained that Christians were in a worse case than the Jews, and counselled that the yoke and burden should be taken away.

Many of these innovations related to the sacred ordinance of baptism. We learn from several writers on ecclesiastical antiquities, whose descriptions are supported by quotations from early Christian authors, that the following was the mode of baptism, in some of the early centuries. Candidates, who had not been baptized in infancy, were initiated as catechumens by various solemnities. They then passed through three stages of probation, with accompanying rites; and before being baptized were subject to the imposition of hands, to abstinence from some kinds of food and indulgence, and for twenty days to exercise from evil spirits, by prayer and insufflation, or being breathed upon. Catechetical exercises also were observed, and saliva and salt were used. Before being immersed the candidates openly renounced Satan, puffed and spat in a westerly direction, where he was supposed to be, and clapped their hands in derision of him. Then turning towards the east, as though they thus turned towards the Lord Jesus, with their hands and eyes uplifted, they declared their faith in, and their submission to him. They were then anointed with oil, were three times crossed, were stripped of their garments, to denote the putting away of sin, stood naked in the presence of many of their own sex, and were then anointed all over with oil. The water having been blessed to render it efficacious, the men and women went into the bath apart. The priest then depressed their heads under the water three times, and in some cases, afterwards sprinkled them, it is said, repeating the usual form of words. After leaving the water they were again anointed and crossed, but this time with ointment, and were clothed with new white garments, to denote the putting on of Christ's righteousness, and received

milk and honey, as symbols of spiritual blessings. Lamps were put in their hands as indications of spiritual illumination, and of the light of a holy example. The bishop afterwards implored the Holy Spirit upon them, and professed to impart the spiritual gift by the imposition of hands in confirmation. Their sins were supposed to be then washed away, they received the Lord's supper, and were deemed fit for heaven.

Such were the absurd and indecent forms observed in ancient immersions. Those forms all rested upon equal authority, and were all, so far as we can learn from history, coeval with dipping; for we never read of that ceremony until we read of its superstitions and puerile appendages, and until human innovations had inundated the church. As modern immersionists do not follow the example of the ancients, they certainly should not plead their authority. They reject so much of their testimony respecting immersion as they do not approve; but, as an authority for a practice which the inspired Scriptures do not sanction, we are bound to reject it altogether. To do one thing on such authority, and to refuse to do many others, is manifestly inconsistent. Such examples however are not worthy of imitation in anything. The simple rite of the apostles and the complex and formidable rite of these ancient churches, are plainly opposed to each other. But the present practice of dipping with clothes on, is unlike either the religious or sanitary purifications of the Jews, or the immersions of ancient Christians; it is neither an actual nor an emblematical cleansing. The Jews washed the skin in privacy, and the ancient Christians immersed people when they were naked as Adam and Eve before the fall, and pleaded that the practice was apostolic; but dipping with clothes on is a device of modern times.

The ancients appear to have authority with our friends who dip, so far as they agree with them, but to have no authority when they differ from them. No

instance of immersion can be found recorded in ancient writers, until they mention infant baptism as a prescriptive custom; so that if antiquity strengthens one opinion of the immersionist, it equally disproves and demolishes another.

Though the ceremonious ancients practised three immersions, with concomitant puerilities, they did not deny the validity of sprinkling or shedding forth. Justin, who was martyred at Rome in 165, speaking of baptism, does not call it immersion, for the practice appears not to have grown up when he wrote his Apologies, but being emblematically 'washed with water;' and, as stated in p. 31, he denominated pagan lustrations by sprinkling, imitations of the true baptism. In Latin authors of the second century, baptizo does not appear to be rendered by modal words which mean to immerse, but by generic words which mean to wash, irrespective of the mode. Sprinkling was sometimes emblematically called washing; and Paul states that the washing of regeneration is effected by the shedding forth of the Holy Ghost. Some of the writings attributed to the ancients are probably spurious, but if they all were genuine, they are of no value as expositions of Scripture. We may in general receive their testimony to matters of fact as authentic; and from them we learn that baptism was sometimes administered at natural streamlets, that washing and afterwards immersion preceded the ordinance, until it superseded it, but that the validity of sprinkling was never authoritatively denied. On the contrary, it was distinctly admitted, and practically recognised, in various instances. In clinical baptisms no other mode was practicable. Thus in the year 337, the emperor Constantine was baptized by Eusebius, as he lay in bed, a few days before his death, other prelates being present, in commemoration of which event a coin was made. Persons who were thus baptized were not afterwards dipped when they recovered. They were indeed sometimes refused the

office of the ministry, not because the validity of their baptism was questioned, but from the want of confidence in the sincerity and soundness of a sick-bed conversion. Lactantius, an eloquent minister, and the tutor of Crispus the son of Constantine, is recorded to have baptized out of a pitcher; and a similar baptism is recorded of Romanus, a soldier, by Laurentius, just before he was martyred, in 258. Athanasius, the Council of Laodicea, and Gregory Nazianzen, a great writer, and an archbishop of Constantinople, spake of baptism by sprinkling as valid. Men who practised trine immersion, whose prejudices were all in favour of that rite, and whose native tongue was Greek, could not but recognize the shedding forth of the element, as the genuine relic of pure and simple times, and acknowledge it as true baptism. Cyprian, who became a bishop in 248, sitting in council with sixty-six other bishops, Jerome, who became a presbyter or bishop in 378, and other early Christian writers apply the prediction of Ezekiel—'Then will I SPRINKLE clean water upon you, &c.' to baptism; which shows that they deemed sprinkling to be a true mode of baptism.

In the first ages of Christianity, when the churches of Christ had no spacious buildings, with baths and vestries, for their use, and when they often met in secluded places to observe the sacred ordinances, it was scarcely possible for the many new converts, and their households, who were baptized, to be dipped. In the most ancient pictorial representations of baptism, which have survived the spoliations of time, the baptized appear standing in shallow water, and the administrators are depicted as shedding forth the element upon their heads.

As the Christian rubric was too simple for the churches of the third century, they began to imitate the more imposing ritual of the law of Moses. That law directed the unclean to wash themselves, before being cleansed by the sprinkling of the water of sepa-

ration; and a similar practice grew up as a preliminary to baptism. The ceremonious orientals would not be outdone by the Jews, in the extent of their lustrations. In the course of time, the preliminary washing, having grown up to a complete immersion, supplanted the true baptism; as it agreed more fully with the incorrect ideas then prevalent of being born of water, and being buried with Christ by baptism. They magnified the importance of being put under water, ascribed a meaning to baptism to which the Divine Institutor never referred, changed the simple rite which he appointed into a cumbrous ceremony, and by various appendages transformed it into a solemn mummery, until the true rite fell into general desuetude. True Baptists omit the preliminary rite, as being unauthorized and improper, and administer the primitive and apostolic baptism only; whereas immersionists omit the Christian baptism, and observe that rite—but without its foolish associations,—which was introduced in an age when superstition obscured the spiritual truths of Christianity, and transformed and magnified its outward rites.

It does not appear that the validity of sprinkling was ever denied, or that the rite was ever entirely laid aside. It was observed in the baptism of the sick, and more generally in some cold and arid climates, where the innovating rite was impracticable.

Amidst the ferment of the Reformation, a fanatical sect sprang up in Wittemburgh, which depreciated the Bible, pretended to supernatural revelations, taught many vagaries, and denied the validity of the true baptism, and the duty to baptize any infants. (D' Aubigne's *Hist. Ref.* b. ix. ch. 7.) Superstitious orientals still dip three times, and some of them, it is said, add sprinkling to trine immersion. Since the Reformation unchained the Bible, a small number only of the Protestants have adopted that rite. It is practically discarded by an immense majority of Bible

students; and as Christians learn to regard the New Testament as its own interpreter, and not to interpret it by the pagan vocabulary, immersion will doubtless sink into disuse as a religious rite; and like some other things, which have been defended with equal learning, and held with equal firmness and devotion, have no existence but in history.

Some historians, and other modern writers, have stated that dipping was the apostolic and primitive rite; but there are no credible authorities to substantiate such a statement. The New Testament, our only sure and allsufficient guide, is plainly and entirely opposed to it. Some learned and good men have been perhaps too ready, without due examination, to adopt those errors as truths, which tradition and antiquity have sanctioned. Successive generations have received those relics as genuine, which previous generations, equally credulous, received and handed down to them; and thus, prescription having usurped the sacred functions of Scripture, sundry doctrines, customs, names, and forms of thought, are current in society, which the infallible test enables us to detect as counterfeits. The eminent men, in whose works are found a few unguarded and incorrect expressions relating to baptism, were in general engaged in contests with serious error, and lived in troublous times, when more urgent and absorbing matters than modes of baptism required their whole attention. They themselves however were not submerged, nor did they dip others. Though a few words in favour of immersion may be extracted out of their voluminous writings, their matured judgment, and their whole practice were opposed to it; so that if their names are of any weight they are against immersion. But we have only one master, even Christ; and though wise and holy men may aid us in learning the true sense of the oracles of God, we must pay homage to no book but his.

THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF CHRISTIANITY OPPOSED
TO IMMERSION.

Christianity is eminently a spiritual and not a ritual religion. Though it requires us to serve God with the body as well as with the spirit, and to solemnize the sister rites of baptism and the Lord's supper, its formal observances are as simple as possible; and it reigns, and imparts purity and peace to the minds of its disciples, only when it is enthroned in their affections.

The services of the law were distinguished by their pictorial and emblematical character. They addressed the imagination and the senses, much more than the understanding. The visible and formal engrossed the attention of the worshipper, rather than the spiritual and unseen. The priests were not public expositors of truth, like Christian ministers, so much as hierophants. They were robed in rich vestments, and conducted a gorgeous ritual in an equally gorgeous temple. Confessions were made not so much by the sinner unbaring his heart and rehearsing his sins, as by the shedding of blood in sacrifice, and the victim being consumed with fire on the altar; and praise was offered by substantial contributions of the fruits of the land. When the Israelite became unclean, he washed himself and his clothes, and received the emblematical sprinkling from one who was clean. In the then state of mankind, it pleased God to ordain, as sufficient for the time, a system of instructive hieroglyphs and emblems, in addition to the moral code. That system was a complex and magnificent parable.

But in the gospel, the kingdom of God came not with observation. That kingdom is within us. Temples, altars, and shrines form no part of it; for renewed hearts are temples and altars for God. Its sacrifices are those of gratitude, benevolence, loyalty, and self-consecration to the Lord; its purification is

that of the mind by the Holy Spirit; and it enjoins godlikeness rather than bodily exercises. Agreeably with its distinctive spirituality, its two emblematical rites are unconnected with anything that is complex, difficult, or imposing to the senses, and are eminently simple. Its rubric is contained in models rather than directions, and is adapted to the understanding of a child. Its rites are not intended to strike the senses, but to aid the mind in its apprehension of spiritual things, and to foster confidence and peaceful emotions; and not to excite nervous trepidation and dread. Little is seen in them by the eye, but much is suggested to the mind; so that the attention may not be occupied so much with what is done, as with the reason why it is done. The ceremonial is simple, in order that the understanding and affections, being but little engaged with the visible symbol, may be directed the more freely and fully to its spiritual meaning. What dissonance does immersion introduce into this beautiful and spiritual economy! In that rite the attention of the administrator, of the subject, and of the spectators, is so much absorbed in the difficult and disagreeable form, as to be hardly capable of appreciating the spiritual objects of baptism; indeed the minds of some immersed persons must be totally unfitted for any spiritual or devotional exercises, during the performance of the dreaded ceremony; whereas baptism by sprinkling is perfectly accordant with the character of Christianity, and its administration is most favourable to meditation and prayer.

IMMERSION OPPOSED TO THE MILD AND GENTLE
SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL.

Some of the rites of the ceremonial law, though adapted to the intellectual and moral state of the ancient Israelites, were costly, painful, and burdensome. But the genius of Christianity is eminently gentle and attractive. The cross which the Lord commands us to bear, proceeds not from him but from

the world. He has imposed no duties which are irksome to the flesh, nor instituted any ordinance that is calculated to excite pain, or even diffidence, in the most timid and sensitive mind. Whatever he imposed, he affirmed to be 'easy and light.' Matt. xi. 30. All painful inflictions and embarrassing services are alien to the mild and suasive spirit of religion.

Had the Lord enjoined any burdensome rite, the Christian would not hesitate but hasten to obey. But the whole spirit and character of the gospel form a strong *a priori* argument against any such rite being enjoined, in the absence of express evidence of its being so. Immersion was not appointed even under that burdensome law which Peter declared that the Jews could not bear. Is it credible then that in a superior and spiritual dispensation, which is distinguished for its tender and gentle spirit, such a rite should be imposed as many persons have occasion to regard with fear, and which in some cases would be inevitably fatal? For a person to entrust himself into the hands of another, in water, and to be publicly plunged therein by him, so far from being 'easy and light,' is a harder service than any that was enjoined by that law which was deemed too hard to be borne.

Some anxious disciples of Christ feel the immersion yoke heavy to bear. They fear that it is a Christian duty, but shrink from it with dread; and the conflict between their mistaken opinion of the will of God, and their natural diffidence and delicacy, renders them unhappy. The idea of being plunged overhead in cold water, exposed to the gaze of a concourse of people, is revolting to their mental and bodily sensibilities; but they are apprehensive that God requires it to be done. For a timid, modest, and delicate woman, to meet the gaze of a curious and excited crowd; and in a state of tremor to approach and go down into a pit of water, which bears a name of sacred derivation; and whilst labouring under a variety of excited and distressing emotions, to be taken hold

of by a man and plunged backward overhead; and then to come forth, sobbing and gasping for breath, all drenched, and shivering with cold, to take off her streaming garments for dry ones, is certainly a very formidable affair. To the imaginations of such persons, the 'baptistry' may well be a sort of 'slough of despond,' at the beginning of the Christian pilgrimage.

What solemn exhortations and appeals have, in some cases, to be made, before persons who are sincerely anxious to do right, can bring their minds to submit to this rite. An unwillingness to obey the commands of God always arises from the power of sin, but the unwillingness to be dipped is, on the contrary, generally connected with an earnest desire to please and serve him. It is the offspring of that natural diffidence and dread to which a holy Christian may be subject, in the absence of a spirit of disobedience. It is sometimes months and even years before opposing feelings can be overcome. But no such emotions are excited by the sister ordinance, though it reminds us of the agony and blood of the Saviour. We show forth the Lord's death by the most agreeable and cheerful acts of life,—eating bread and partaking of the cup, as a sacred feast. That ordinance is not only free from every thing dangerous, indelicate, and distressing, but is eminently social and delightful. If a violent death as a sacrifice for sin is thus symbolized, by express command, how much more might it be expected that the descent and gracious influences of the Comforter should be set forth, not by a difficult, perilous, and unseemly rite, but by one that is simple, safe, and scrupulously delicate?

The idolator seeks to please his imaginary God by self-inflicted torture, and the Romanist believes that the benevolent and happy Jehovah is pleased with austere and painful rites. But Christ enjoined nothing adverse to the feelings of a sensitive mind, or of a sickly and delicate frame. Whatever is most

pleasing to him, is most happy for us. The Christian statute book does not prescribe a single act, that is attended with pain or danger, to the most exquisite mental delicacy, to the most tender and fragile structure of body, or to the most precarious state of health. Even self-denial is promotive both of piety, of mental vigour and enjoyment, and of longevity. The will of God and the happiness of man are inseparable, and any bodily discomfort, endured as an act of obedience to him, is founded on a mistaken view of his will. The laws of nature and of Christianity are alike conducive to human happiness. When we promote his glory we promote our own highest good. Baptism was made for man, and not man for baptism. It is opposed to the will of God that any anxious minds should have cause to shrink from a Christian ordinance, as many pious persons do from immersion. How then can immersion be deemed to be such an ordinance?

There are indeed persons whose minds are very differently affected by this rite, and to whom its very repulsiveness renders it the more attractive. It is incomparably more easy to submit to immersion than to leave off sin. This burdensome rite savours of self-righteousness. It seems to be doing something to be saved; and coming but once across the path to heaven, it is felt, after being put under water, that some 'great thing' is done towards the attainment of eternal life.

Our beloved friends sometimes speak of going under water as being a cross. It is indeed a cross, imposed by tradition and the commandments of men, but not a cross of Christ. Not one word is found in the New Testament which speaks of the true baptism as being a cross, however cold the season, or however delicate the persons who were baptized. As immersion is admitted by its advocates to be a cross, and as the Lord's baptism is no more a cross than the Lord's supper, immersion and baptism must surely be two different rites.

IMMERSION DANGEROUS AND UNSEEMLY.

Bathing in cold water, if a person be in a state of health to bear it, and if he go into the water in a proper state of body, is undoubtedly healthful. The great majority of persons may therefore, with due precaution, be safely immersed. Such persons as are afflicted with organic or severe functional diseases, prudently abstain from being dipped, so that instances of pernicious results, though they sometimes transpire, are not common. But can that rite be deemed an imperative Christian duty, which some Christians could observe only at the hazard of health and life? Immersion would certainly be unsafe to some persons in a precarious state of health; and to those who are afflicted with organic disease, a cold bath might be literally a 'watery grave.' It is incredible that God should have commanded any act as pleasing to him, or as beneficial to us, by which health and life may be jeopardized; and that he, who loves mercy rather than sacrifice, should prescribe that rite as an imperative duty, which the teachings of medical science sometimes peremptorily forbid.

It is sometimes said that no persons have suffered injury from being immersed. But this is certainly incorrect. In various well authenticated instances, serious injuries have been sustained. But no person was ever known to suffer the least harm from the ordinance of the Lord, nor is there a single inconvenience connected with it, that belongs to immersion.

Occasionally persons are converted to God in old age. Are they, in their decrepitude, to go down into water, with tottering steps, to be plunged, and to come forth all shivering and drenched? Is there in a religion of mercy and love, no consideration for natural timidity, and for age and health? Can the gospel have a ritual law of cast iron, that will not bend to human infirmity, nor yield to the melting appeals of diffidence, modesty, and health; but inexorably re-

quires all persons indiscriminately to be dipped? No. God is not a hard master. The immersionist may plead that he does not attempt to immerse such persons as are deemed unable to submit to the rite; but who gave him that discretionary power; and in what part of Scripture has God authorized baptism to be omitted, in the cases in which immersion is dangerous or impracticable?

The sick and dying cannot be dipped, but they may be baptized. When they anxiously turn to the Lord, and desire to receive the emblematical body and blood of Christ, will the 'strict communionist' refuse the sacred symbols to those contrite and believing sinners, whom God deigns to accept and save, because they are undipped?

Immersionists have justly complained when the unbaptized dead have been refused the rite of Christian burial; but it is surely much more improper to withhold the Christian sacrament from the dying, because they are not immersed, and when they cannot be so!

Remarkable scenes sometimes occur when the rite of dipping is performed. Numbers of persons are drawn from the surrounding neighbourhood to the scene of attraction, not so much to worship God, as to see a strange sight; and while the gazing multitude seek to gratify their curiosity, the persons who are to be immersed are in a state of tremor, of both body and mind. Have they not, while being plunged, sometimes convulsively sobbed, and even screamed aloud? Have they never struggled in paroxysms of fear and distress, until they have fallen from the minister's grasp into the water? Have they never fainted, gone into fits, and been lifted out of the water as though they were dead? Has no administrator been known to lose his balance, while attempting to dip a person of larger bulk than himself? Have not spectators been reluctantly constrained to smile, and even to laugh at the scenes they have witnessed? In cold climates, has not ice had to be broken to obtain ac-

cess to water; and have not the immersed had their garments stiffened about them with frost, before they could take them off? Have no persons been drowned, when it has been attempted to immerse in rivers; and have not others received injury to their health? Is not immersion a distressing rite to womanly weakness and modesty, and opposed to manly self-respect? Has not the physician sometimes to be consulted, and were not his prohibition obeyed, might it not entail sickness and death? Does not immersion produce a very different state of mind to that in which we solemnize the Lord's supper, and in which we ought to solemnize baptism? And if so, can it be supposed to proceed from the same Divine Lawgiver? Are there not many holy and gifted ministers who are physically incapable of officiating in the water, though they are able to attend to all other functions of the sacred ministry? And is not this rite felt to be so perilous, that a minister who has preached until he is covered with perspiration, feels it necessary to depute another person to go into the water to dip? Since these dangers and inconveniences do not appear to have been experienced by the apostles, and do not appertain to baptism by sprinkling, it is just to infer that sprinkling, and not immersion, is the true mode of baptism.

IMMERSION SOMETIMES IMPRACTICABLE.

The rites of the law of Moses were so opposed to the customs of other nations, that they environed Israel like a guardian wall of separation from neighbouring countries. Their observance was intended to be limited in extent, as well as in duration. But Christianity is adapted to every part of the world. It can reign amidst the horrors of a polar climate, and the burning heat of the tropics; and it is equally suitable to the sickly invalid, and the decrepid centenarian, and to the robust man. The great commission of the church is, to go into all the world, and to disciple and baptize every creature. Baptism

must therefore be an ordinance which can be readily administered in 'all the world,' and to 'every creature;' without journeying to a place of deep water, or waiting for a mild season, or for improved health. As an ordinance for every creature, it is practicable in the case of every creature.

But immersion is sometimes impracticable. It is so in the case of the very lame, of the sick, and of the extremely aged. How is it to be performed in the absence of sufficiently deep water, as in deserts; in countries where, during long droughts, the natural streams are dried up, and water becomes more precious than bread; or in inland tropical climates where water is the most valuable because the most scarce of all things? How are the inhabitants of high northern latitudes to be immersed, when winter reigns in icy horrors over the earth, and when water can be obtained only by melting ice and snow? The practice is bound up in difficulties, some of which, in our temperate and well watered island, we cannot sufficiently appreciate.

Christianity is not the religion of genial summers, temperate latitudes, and well watered plains; but the religion of all classes, of all seasons, and of all the climates in the world. It is adapted equally to cold Greenland, and the hot Indies; and to the arid desert, and the watered plains of Italy and Holland. Its beautiful and facile ordinances are suited to the attenuated and the athletic, to the young and the aged, and to the most feminine weakness and manly strength. They are always practicable, and always easy, in every place, and at every time. Infancy and age, sickness and a dying hour, midnight gloom, and eastern dungeons, are no hindrances to the administration of its baptism. It excites no apprehensions of danger, it renders not necessary any medical advice; but it is adapted to all periods of life, and to every state of health, to any part of the day or of the night, to every season of the year, and to every cli-

mate that is habitable by man. Christ has ordained no institution but what may be universally observed; and that which cannot be observed by all classes of Christians, he has not enjoined upon any; so that immersion cannot be enjoined. Had he made immersion an indispensable duty, numbers would be thereby excluded from heaven, who delight to do his will. If it be not of indispensable obligation, why should so much importance be attached to it; and why should not that zeal which is expended on immersion, be devoted to things which are of indispensable obligation?

Had immersion been enjoined, we should have had injunctions to overcome the natural reluctance and dread with which many pious persons regard it, lest diffidence should lead to disobedience; and directions how to act in the absence of the requisite conveniences, what course to take in respect to the sick who cannot be dipped, and how to immerse safely and orderly, so that no injury may be inflicted on health, and no offence may be offered to modesty and piety. We have specific directions how to observe the Lord's supper, so as to guard against the temptations to which eating and drinking might expose us; though in that ordinance such directions would appear to be much less necessary than in respect to immersion. And yet where so many cautions must have been required, we have absolutely not one. Admitting them to be necessary adjuncts of this rite, the New Testament must be an imperfect and unfinished book, or dipping must be an innovation in Christianity. As the former alternative cannot be adopted, we must adopt the latter.

Let it not be said, because we cannot receive immersion as of the Lord, that therefore we slight HIS ordinances. Whoever may make such an affirmation is deserving of rebuke. The evangelical churches of Christ, which baptize by sprinkling, adore him as the Son of God, confide in him as their only Saviour, and cherish the most devoted loyalty to his throne. They

profoundly revere every word that fell from his sacred lips; and are supremely anxious correctly to understand, and faithfully to obey his will. They do not hesitate by reason of difficulty, when the way of duty is plain. While some believers in immersion regard it with instinctive dread, many of the truly baptized children of God would, if required, be willing to lay down their lives in his cause, and for his glory. Some of God's people who have been baptized by sprinkling, have been consumed in flames; and did they shrink from water who shrank not from fire?

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

We may now be entitled to ask, whether, in the face of such facts and evidences as have been adduced, it can be deemed so absolutely certain, that to baptize is to dip and only to dip, as that we should be required to be submerged in water, as a certain and imperative duty. It is foolishly imagined by some, who confound baptism with immersion, that we inculcate the transgression of Christ's law, when we attempt to show that they have totally mistaken its meaning. We reject immersion from a conviction that he never instituted such a practice. It has been vainly attempted to overcome all the numerous and insuperable difficulties of the immersion theory, and to transform the most remote improbabilities into absolute certainties, by alleging, that as baptizo means to dip, there must have been an immersion whenever there was a baptism, whatever facts may be shown to be opposed to such an opinion. But to affirm that baptizo, as used in Scripture, means to dip, is not to prove any thing; it is merely to assume the whole question at issue. In the inquiry after truth, the Bible must not be interpreted by previously fixing in the mind a determinate meaning to any of its words; but their true meaning must be ascertained by the sense in which, and the circum-

stances in connection with which they are used. The actual use of words, and not their etymology, is our only true guide to their true sense. To interpret facts according to a previously constructed theory, was the practice in the exploded philosophy of ancient times; and such is still the practice of immersionists respecting baptism. Since the time of lord Bacon, the students of philosophy have learned natural truths inductively from natural facts; and many Christian truths must be learned in the same manner. The immersionist does not learn his sense of baptizo from the New Testament, but having occasionally found the sense of to dip in the pagan classics, he attaches that sense to baptizo, as it proceeded from the lips of the Saviour, and from the pens of the sacred writers, whatever reasons may be shown to be against it. This important error lies at the base of his system. He interprets the word of God by the prejudicated sense of a verb, instead of learning the true sense of that verb from its use in the word of God itself. Not a single instance has been found in the Old or New Testament, or in the Apocrapha, in which it has been or can be proved that baptizo has the sense of to dip, or that such a sense is even probable. In every instance that sense is improbable, and in some instances it is impossible.

The preceding evidences, it will have been seen, do not form such a chain, as that its unity and strength depend upon the soundness of each separate link. As arguments, they are independent of each other. If some of them could be overturned, the structure of truth would rest firmly and securely upon those which remain. Whatever force each one may be deemed to possess separately, when the whole are viewed in mutual connection, they must, it is believed, amount to a moral demonstration of the true mode of baptism.

Dr. Godwin, in his able and elaborate work on baptism, having shown that the Scripture sense of

baptizo is not to dip, says, in pp. 196 & 7. 'If the term do not denote dipping, it is not possible to prove the practice of dipping in the administration of baptism. It is simply an inference from the many waters of Enon and Jordan,—from the descent of Philip and the Ethiopian to, or into, the water,—and from the supposition, strange, low, and superstitious, that a Christian is buried with his Lord by being put under water. No dipping of the person was ever commanded by God under the former dispensation. No public dippings of the person were practised either by Jews or heathens, as rites of purification. Such an act is unsuitable to the meaning of baptism. It would have been neither decent nor practicable, in the circumstances of the baptisms recorded in the New Testament. It is not supported either by the literal or the figurative language of the Scriptures. But the public sprinkling of the person with water was a rite of Divine appointment. It was often practised by the Jews and other nations. It is most appropriate as an emblem of religious purity. It is consonant with all the statements, and all the omissions, of the sacred writers. It agrees with all their language, literal and figurative. The one mode of baptism is as much opposed to the universality, gentleness, and spirituality, of the Christian system, as the other is in accordance with these characteristics. We conclude, therefore, that the baptism by water which was instituted by our Lord, and observed by his apostles and the first disciples, was administered, not by putting the persons to be baptized under water, but by sprinkling them with water.'

The word of God is the only sure criterion of that truth which no dogmatism can destroy, and which no prejudice can pervert. Antiquity, tradition, translations, and the opinions and concessions of distinguished men, are often alleged in favour of immersion; but these things are all merely human, and they all fail to establish it as the ordinance of God.

All human acts and opinions must be discarded, as being totally incompetent to determine authoritatively what is the will of God. He has guarded the purity of the Bible, by a special Providence, for the same reason that he gave it to the world. The more thoroughly the sacred book is examined, with an unprejudiced mind, the clearer and stronger does the great body of circumstantial evidence in favour of baptism by sprinkling appear. In the advocacy of immersion, strong words and feelings are often mistaken for strong arguments. The immersion theory has no solid foundation, and no spiritual correspondence; there is no command, example, or even metaphor to sanction it; but it supersedes the ancient symbol which God appointed, and the Saviour perpetuated, without authority and without use. In entering the spiritual temple of God, those Christians who have been sprinkled in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, have been subject to the only proper ablution at the font, which, as Dr. Halley remarks, the Divine Architect has placed at its porch.

It is often affirmed by writers in favour of immersion, that nothing can be baptism that differs from Christ's institution; that what is not commanded is virtually forbidden, as will worship; that no additions should be made, by human authority, to the positive appointments of Christ; and that to alter a rite, is in reality to institute a new rite that is not sanctioned by heaven. Now as it has been shown that immersion was not instituted by Christ, and has no divine authority or sanction, and that the true mode of baptism consists in the descent of the element by sprinkling, it behoves our beloved brethren, even upon their own showing, to relinquish their present practice, and to receive the true baptism from those who have themselves been duly baptized. That immersion will ultimately be abandoned, may be expected with all the confidence that a strong faith in the power of truth can inspire. But the human mind cannot precipitately

surrender its cherished belief, and the objects which have been intrenched in its strong affections and prejudices. Its movements must be slow and progressive. Many persons, who seek after truth as a 'hidden treasure,' receive it with joy. Others however, whose earliest and fondest recollections, whose endearing associations of family, friendship, and conversion to God, and whose pious toils, sacrifices, prayers, and denominational attachments, have all been connected with immersion, must feel it to be no small task to recognise an error, and an innovation, in that rite which they had always regarded with devoted confidence, as an ordinance of God. To proselytes the difficulty must be still greater. In adopting immersion they sincerely believed that they had found 'a more excellent way,' and they submitted to it as an act of obedience to Christ. For a person to acknowledge that he abandoned the truth when he imagined that he embraced it, and that he renounced the ordinance of heaven when he believed that he found it in an earthly illusion, and for him to retrace that step as erroneous by which he fondly thought he was led to the truth, is almost more than human nature can be expected to submit to. It is natural that he who has been proselyted to an opinion, should be most anxious to convince both himself and others that he turned from a wrong way to the right, and that therefore he should be a more zealous advocate of that opinion than those who were educated in its belief. But the claims of truth and the will of Christ are paramount, and at his feet all human pride and prejudice must be cast away. Such feelings are most unfavourable to the acquisition of truth, and have often led men to reject it as a vile and worthless thing. But the sincere and anxious inquirer, who may have read the preceding pages with displeasure, is recommended calmly and thoughtfully to review the argument again. Do not hastily reject it, lest in doing so, you should reject that which is true. Should you not yield to an argument which you

are unable to vanquish? You may perhaps discover some assailable points therein, but if the objections against dipping appear more decisive than the reasons which have been assigned in its favour; if, when weighed in an impartial balance, the evidence preponderates in favour of sprinkling, must not a conscience that is truly loyal to Christ, lead you to surrender the most cherished opinion, rather than oppose a rite which he ordained, and to which he deigned to submit.

Most men are probably subject to some degree of prejudice, and the strongest prejudices of men are commonly identified with their greatest errors; so that though they can vindicate the truth in a Christian spirit, when their errors are attacked, their tempers are endangered. In papal and protestant churches, sturdy prejudice often appears as the defender of vulnerable forms and rites, and often resists unanswerable arguments. Every attempt to disarm and subdue it, in some minds, but adds to its inveteracy and strength. But truth will live and reign when we and our prejudices are gone from the earth. It becomes us as Christians to cultivate that child-like spirit which is distinguished for simplicity, gentleness, and a willingness to learn. We may argue respecting the rites of religion until we lose its spirit, and transgress its laws; and our energies, instead of being devoted to the salvation of men, may be so directed against each other, that in the attempt to vanquish others, we may ourselves be vanquished by an unsanctified temper.

The undue importance that is practically attached to an outward rite, and that rite merely human, has produced its natural results in the minds of some of its adherents. I speak not merely of the assumption of the sacred name of 'Baptist,' either as being inappropriate to those who assume it, or as implying that we the true Baptists are unbaptized; I speak not only of the concentration of the mind on one rite, and that rite misunderstood, having a natural tendency to hinder the growth of a largeness of heart, and to lead

us to magnify the forms and depreciate the spirit of piety; or of the unwarrantable spirit which leads men to take upon themselves to affirm, that holy Christians are unfit to approach the Lord's table, because they are undipped; but I refer to the excesses into which some immersionists have fallen. When a powerful impetus is given to certain minds, the momentum they have obtained leads them on to a terminus much beyond the station where others deem it proper to stop. Thus in the early ages, when the form of baptism was changed and magnified, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration sprang up, and has deluded the world for sixteen centuries, and is still held by some of those who have practically returned to the primitive form. And now that immersion is again invested with undue importance, new sects have arisen which deride Christian experience, magnify the virtue of the 'baptistry,' as though mercy and purity were found through the water, and dip for the remission of sins. If being plunged in the name of God were really so efficacious, it must be wise to postpone the ceremony to as late a period in life as possible, so that all the previous sins may be washed away. This however is a most serious error; and it behoves the immersionists, in their attempts to establish and spread their opinions, to guard against the danger of magnifying their distinctive rite, lest others should go still further than themselves, and teach delusive and dangerous heresies.

The spirit of mind in which we solemnize a rite, is certainly more important than our being precisely correct in its formal observance. If persons are dipped who, owing to their education, or to their having been misled by mistaken teachers, sincerely believe it to be the law of God, and who have been placed in circumstances unfavourable to the knowledge of truth, they submit to immersion, though it be a human innovation, as the ordinance of the Lord; and as an act of well meant though mistaken obedience, we doubt not that it will be accepted of God. The form they observe is wrong,

but their motive in observing it is right. But if obstinate self-will, prejudice, or pride, should prevent persons from being willing to learn, should lead them to hear such expositions only as agree with their own cherished views, and to refuse to listen to such as contravene them, however true they may be, it is manifest that they believe a doctrine to be false, partly because they do not wish it to be true. Their error is not absolutely free from sin. If, though we avail ourselves of all accessible aids in the study of the inspired volume, and pursue that study with an anxious, devout, and reverent heart, we by reason of human frailty, mistake the true form of a rite, and if we observe it as we conscientiously understand it, we trust that God will be pleased with our sincere endeavours. When a mistake originates in the weakness of our judgment, and not in wrong dispositions of mind, he will rather pity us as erring creatures, than condemn us as wicked; for it is better to observe a mistaken rite in a Christian spirit, than a true rite with an evil heart. All moral duties are so plainly defined that to mistake their meaning is impossible. But the Christian rites are defined with less strictness, the spiritual import being more important than the outward forms, so that we are not bound by a rubric of copious and specific details. But it never recognises bathing as baptizing. Were we, with our views of the will of God, to be dipped in his name, so far from being pleasing to him, it would be taking his name in vain. And yet some advocates of that rite treat us as though a difference of opinion from them were an act of disloyalty to Christ. They deny that our baptisms are acts of obedience, though he will accept them as such; not only because they are administered according to the form that was observed under his own superintendence and direction, but because also they are administered in the spirit of true obedience. Even if their opinion be law to them, it certainly is not law to those who, un-

der the guidance of the sacred oracles, are constrained to believe it to be untrue. The advocates of a punctilious regard to forms, and especially when those forms are human, should consider that they lay themselves open to a charge of formalism. The churches which reject their Christian brethren from the Lord's table, in common with the unregenerate and impenitent, because they are undipped, however conscientious they may be, appear to betray a spirit of uncharitableness that is a lingering relic of past ages of intolerance. Such minds as are subject to that spirit, fictitiously attach to a human error all the importance of an infallible truth.

Gentleness is generally the associate of truth, and uncharitableness is as frequently the associate of error. Those advocates of error who have been most vehement, and who, like Dr. Carson, have used very intemperate, unloving, and unholy words, may foster the prejudices of believers in their own opinion, but to others, their spirit appears as unamiable, as their reasonings are fallacious. Such language as theirs is neither pleasing to God, useful to men, nor honourable to themselves. It may sometimes be a duty to expose self-sufficiency, to chastise flippancy, and to humble pride; but passion and prejudice are sorry substitutes for clear and conclusive argument. It becomes us to devote as much greater attention and zeal to the spiritual truths and privileges of the gospel, than to outward ordinances, as they are of greater importance. Christians should also cease to be angry with each other, and carefully abstain from the sin of counting each other as enemies, because they hold and advocate different views of truth. Let no man, when he finds it difficult to refute an argument, descend to the useless and sinful work of labelling it with foul and insulting epithets. It may be easier to designate it with such words as nonsense, blasphemy, trifling, and the like, than to confute it, but such language will not convince any one's judgment

nor prepossess his feelings in favour of sentiments which are thus defended. Christian discussion should be conducted with meekness and fear, and none of those passions which savour of Satan, be permitted to lay their polluting hands on the truths and laws of heaven. It ill becomes an erring man to affect the infallible, and to fulminate anathemas. Every one should be willing to hear an opponent patiently,—for what have we to fear if we are right? and should treat him with becoming consideration and deference. The tongue of controversy must learn to speak in gentle tones, and all Christians to be deferential, forbearing, and tender-hearted. When the mild and heavenly spirit of the gospel reigns in those who now transgress the law of love, and when the kingdom of God comes into all our hearts with power, though uniformity may continue to be a fiction, to which no legislature can give an actual existence, heaven and earth will behold a union of Christian hearts, extensive as the boundaries of the Church of God, and durable as his throne.

APPENDIX.

I. BAPTIZO. The following remarks are added in confirmation of the statement that baptizo is used in Scripture, in a sense different to that of the classics.

Words are mutable like other earthly things. The mutations in the meaning of Greek words during more than a thousand years, and the different senses attached to them in Greece, and in foreign countries, may be readily conceived from the difference in the language of our ancient and modern writers, and in that of the educated and uneducated classes of society; and from the different dialects spoken in England, and the altered sense in which some of our words are used in the colonies.

Ideas and things are so much more numerous than words, that many words in all languages have necessarily various meanings. As new ideas and things come into existence, and old languages are introduced into other countries than those to which they belong, words come to be used in new senses, until their primary sense ceases to be suggested when they are used. Words are spoken correctly when they are thus used in senses contrary to those which etymology sanctions, because the altered sense is fixed by use, and they are understood as they are intended to be. Thus though Hebraistic Greek would have been incorrect at Athens, in the time of Xenophon, it was correct at Jerusalem in the time of our Lord. Josephus, and Philo-Judæus, who was born 30. B. C. being learned men, and well versed in the classics, are said to have aimed at a pure Attic Greek diction; but the inspired writers used the Jewish idiom, so that there are words in the New Testament which are not found in any Greek author, and others which have quite a different sense to that of the classics.

A number of words have been selected which are used in different senses in the classics and in Scripture. The following are

examples. *Adiakritos*, class. confused; scrip. impartial. *Aion*, class. time, age; scrip. the earth, mankind. *Anathema*, class. a sacred offering; scrip. accursed, excommunicated. *Daimoniodes*, class. divine; scrip. devilish. *Doxa*, class. an opinion; scrip. brightness, glory. *Kopazo*, class. to toil, to be weary; scrip. to cease, to be calm. *Ophilema*, class. a debt; scrip. a sin. *Pneumatikos*, class. breathing, windy; scrip. spiritual.

Baptizo is a word of infrequent occurrence in the classics. Out of the fifty instances quoted by Dr. Godwin, it means to dip but in three; and in those three it is not certain whether it means a partial or an entire dipping; in most of the other instances it means to be overwhelmed, or sunk. If the usual classical sense of baptizo belonged to that word in the New Testament, the command to baptize men would certainly require us to drown them; for baptizo commonly refers to the act and condition of being sunk, as a wrecked ship is in the sea, and denotes a continued submersion therein, and not a momentary dip. Josephus employs the very word of our Lord (*baptizontes*) in his narrative of the drowning of Aristobulus, a youthful high priest, by the servants of Herod: 'Continually pressing him down, and baptizing him as in sport, while he was swimming, they completely suffocated him.' Ant. xv. 3. It is clearly impossible that our Lord, in using the same word, could have meant the same thing. According to the classics, objects are baptized which are not dipped, but are in the state of being under water, by whatever means they are brought into that state; as Aristotle speaks of the shore being baptized (*baptizesthai*) with the tide; and as, in Lucian, Timon speaks of pressing a person down who is in water, and baptizing (*baptizonta*) him, that he may not be able to rise again. As baptizo means to dip in a very few instances only, in all the classics, do the immersionists use it in its common classical sense? Undoubtedly they do not, nor can they baptize, as the classics commonly describe baptism, without drowning people. They neither baptize in the usual classical sense, nor in the Scripture sense. That classical sense must be given up by them as it is by us. We must look to the divine oracles only, as the true exponent of their own language. In the classics baptizo is always applied to common things, and is never applied to sacred things; but in the Scriptures, on the contrary, it is used about a hundred times in a sacred sense, and is never applied to common things. Being chang-

ed in reference to its objects, it is also used in an altered sense ; and from denoting a complete submersion, apart from the mode, it denotes, symbolically, a complete cleansing, apart from the mode ; so that baptisma is the designation of the rite of emblematical purification, and refers to the design and character of the ordinance, and not to the mode of baptizing.

2. It should have been stated in reference to the self-ablutions enjoined upon Israel, that though they were intended to promote cleanliness and health, they certainly were enjoined as religious duties, and were necessary to constitute a complete purification.

3. 'As in the Hebrew sprinkle.' p. 31. These words were inserted by mistake. There is, in Psalm LI. 7, a reference to the rite of sprinkling with hyssop, but that rite is not mentioned in the Hebrew.

4. PROSELYTE baptism. As the Jew who was unclean was excluded from society, and from religious privileges, until, after his observance of the self-ablutions, he was sprinkled, it is not likely that that rite would be omitted when a gentile became a proselyte, since God enjoined the same mode of purification upon both. The gentile was probably initiated as the Jew was restored, by privately washing himself, and being publicly sprinkled by an administrator.

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